

**International Round Table Italy - Russia@Dubna**  
**«Efforts in Fundamental Research and Perspectives for Applied S&T and**  
**Business Development»**  
**18-19 December 2009**  
**International Conference Hall**  
**JINR, Dubna, Russia**

**Opening session**  
**09.00 a.m., Friday, 18 December 2009**

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**Delegation of the European Union to Russia**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Academician Sissakian, Mr. Ianuzzi, Pietro, Dear colleagues,

I am very **pleased to speak to you** on behalf of the European Commission at this International Round Table Italy-Russia@Dubna on **Efforts in Fundamental Research and Perspectives for Applied S&T and Business Development**, and let me start by **congratulating** the **organisers** of this event for having worked out a very **important and timely** programme.

We are all aware that cooperation between the European Union and Russia in the areas of **science and technology**, as well as **higher education**, **stands out as an undisputed success story**. We have noted this on many occasions, so there is no need to go into more detail today.

Therefore, allow me to try to **illustrate with three thoughts why**, in our view, the particular topic of this conference is both important and timely.

**First**, we all know that the **European Union is a net importer of practically all raw materials** which are **required to fuel a modern economy**, such as oil, gas, timber and metals. The **only resource** which the European Union has plenty of is **its people** – a large pool of talented individuals and a highly educated workforce.

The European Union **can not draw on a natural resource base** as the underpinning of its economy, so **the only option** we have to **ensure long-term and sustainable economic growth** is to rely on the **entrepreneurial energy** and the **innovative spirit** of our people.

This is captured by the **notion of a "knowledge-economy"**, which in the European Union we have made the guiding principle of our policies. And it is the reason why **in the European Union, education, scientific research, technological development, and innovation** take an important place in our economic policies.

In particular, it is reflected in the so-called "**Lisbon Agenda**" to make the European Union the most competitive economy in the world, and the related "**Barcelona targets**" with which the EU aims to increase R&D investments towards 3% of GDP, with two-thirds of it to come from the private sector.

**Creating the European Research Area** as "an area where researchers, scientific knowledge and technology freely circulate" is **one of the key steps** towards achieving these objectives, and has become an explicit objective in the **new Lisbon Treaty** which entered into force on 01 December 2009.

The **mobility of researchers & innovators, scientific infrastructures** of pan-European interest, the **coordination of policies within** the European Union, the **mutual recognition of professional & academic qualifications**, and other aspects related to the EU's internal market policies are important elements in our endeavours.

The **European Research Council** is one of the most recent additions to the set of pan-European initiatives in this area **to support fundamental, visionary frontier research**, with a budget of €7.5 billion in 2007-2013. Its very establishment is a great success, and I believe it is hard to overestimate the importance its activities will have for the development of the European Research Area.

**Second**, the EU's **science relationship with Russia** is arguably the **most developed** compared to the EU's other international cooperation partners. The EU actively works with Russia in research, as well as in higher education, via the **national programmes** of the individual **EU Member States**, via the **programmes of the European Community** itself, as well as in international fora.

Russia has consistently been the **largest and most active third-country participant** of the **European Framework Programmes for Research & Technological Development**, it is a full member of **pan-European organisations** such as **Eureka**, and it has become an important **partner in large-scale research infrastructures of pan-European significance**.

In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that in the **European Union's relationship with Russia**, cooperation in science, research and higher education **takes a central place**. Indeed, with no other country or region in the world has the EU agreed to work towards the creation of a **Common Space in Research, Education and Cultural Matters**.

And I wish to argue that we are well on the road towards its construction. Let me just recall that with Russia, the **European Commission has started to implement coordinated calls for co-funded research proposals**, whereby the EU and Russia

equitably **share both resources and responsibilities** to **co-fund joint research initiatives**. This is in addition to the traditional “bottom up” activities by the scientific communities themselves and may serve as a useful model for our future relations in other areas as well.

**Third**, national actors are becoming much more **interdependent**, with the rise of an “**open innovation**” model, in which companies are looking for the best external knowledge regardless of where it is produced, and with the results of published research becoming **instantly accessible around the world**. **Research and innovation** are increasingly **globalised**.

In particular, with regard to cooperation on research & innovation with Russia, we were pleased to see that numerous European and bilateral projects have given rise to the so-called **Gate2RuBIN initiative** (Gate to Russia: Business and Innovations). It was launched by three recognized Russian organisations (the Russian Technology Transfer Network, the Russian Union of Innovation Technology Centres and the Russian Agency for SME Support) acting as a single partner in Russia for the **Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)** of the **EU Competitiveness & Innovation Programme (CIP)** and focusing on new partnerships between European and Russian innovative companies and research organisations, technology transfer between the science sector and industry as well as new science and innovation-oriented EU-Russia cooperation projects.

In this context, the European Union has adopted a **strategic framework for international science and technology cooperation with non-EU countries**. The **objective** is to strengthen the scientific & technological base of the European Union, to boost the competitiveness of its industry, and to deal with global challenges in a context of “global responsibility” *by means of improved coherence and synergies between the various international S&T cooperation activities of the EU Member States and of the European Community itself*.

The spirit, and underlying justification, is that it is becoming increasingly important **to coordinate** and – where possible – **to mesh** the bilateral science cooperation programmes with “third countries” of the individual EU Member States and those of the European Community, **so that they can reinforce each other**. Importantly, this will be for the benefit of our international partner countries *and* of the EU and its Member States.

The **regular sharing of information** about each other’s international cooperation programmes between EU Member States and the European Commission, **the coordination** of international cooperation policies and activities between EU Member States and the European Community, as well as the establishment of

**common priorities and joint initiatives** and their eventual **joint implementation**, will be crucial for making the Strategy operational and for achieving its aims.

So it is against this background that today's event is both important and timely. We are very pleased to see that that EU Member States' main national science programmes are presented and discussed also **with a view to their pan-European significance and possible synergies with European-wide programmes**, through a dialogue which involves representatives of the Italian and the Russian scientific communities, of the Italian and the Russian public authorities, and of the European Commission.

The European Commission very much welcomes this initiative, and it is in this spirit that I would like to wish you all, us all, an interesting and productive meeting. Thank you.