

## G7 Science Conference

Rome, 3 May 2017

### *Welcome address*

by Alberto Quadrio-Curzio

This year marks the 414<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. An Academy whose fame harks back to Federico Cesi, Duke of Acquasparta, and the imperishable science of Galileo Galilei, a universal genius who was among the Academy's earliest members. We are glad and honoured that the 2017 G7 Science Academies Meeting is going to stand out as a "token" of the 414<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of our Academy. An Academy which stands proud not only for the reputation of many of its members, but also for its role and its continuous commitment to promoting science and culture along the historical heritage of Galileo's scientific revolution, which had enormous effects also on institutions, politics, society, technology and economy.

Today, not all National Academies pursue their own scientific research since this is more often done within universities, laboratories and institutes. Instead, all Academies closely follow the macro-evolution of natural sciences and humanities and their wide-ranging impact on institutional, social and civil matters, as well as on technological and economic issues. On this basis, the National Academies act as *pro veritate* witnesses of their Governments and carry out international diplomacy and scientific and cultural policy in a dialogue with other Academies and equivalent international networks, also to bring common and compelling issues to the attention of their own public at large. This is of fundamental importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, a time in which a new wave of revolutionary innovation is often not accompanied by civil rights and progress, universal education, gender parity, reduction of disparities within countries and between North and South, as also indicated in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable development.

As the President of the hosting Academy of the 2017 G7 Science Academies Meeting, I would like to express my warmest thanks to the three Lincei Working Groups that have drafted and examined, with the other Academies, the three Joint Statements on: *Cultural heritage: building resilience to natural disasters* (coordinated by G. Seminara); *The challenge of neurodegenerative diseases in an aging population* (coordinated by M. Brunori); *New economic growth: the role of science, technology, innovation and infrastructure* (coordinated by Alberto Quadrio-Curzio).

My heartfelt recognition also goes to the Presidents and Vice Presidents of the National Academies present here today: Sébastien Candel, President of the French Académie des sciences; Jörg Hacker, President of the German Leopoldina Akademie; Keisuke Hanaki, Vice President of the Science Council of Japan; Richard Catlow, Vice President of the Royal Society; Maryse Lasonde, President of the Royal Society of Canada (who unfortunately was forced to cancel her participation due to a thunderstorm in Canada); and Marcia McNutt, President of the American National Academy of Science, who unfortunately could not join us today, but has sent a thoughtful message which will be read later. The contribution that the experts of these academies have offered was fundamental for the elaboration of the Joint Statements. The names of all these scientists will be mentioned later, but for now I wish to express my appreciation to them.

Finally, but no less important, today's G7 Science Conference on *The role of National Academies and International Academy Networks in advising Institutions* underlines the role of all these Academies to establishing a constant dialogue between science and politics,

between different cultures and histories of peoples and nations and to promote peaceful coexistence, civil and human progress.

I am very pleased the Presidents of the international academy networks have joined us today and wish to extend a warm welcome to all of them: Krishan Lal, Co-Chair of IAP for Science, the global network of science academies, and the representatives of IAP regional networks, Mostapha Bousmina, President of the African network, Juan Asenjo, Co-Chair of the InterAmerican network, Yoo Hang Kim, President of the Asian network, Thierry Courvoisier, President of the European Academies Science Advisory Council, Mohamed Hassan, Executive Director of TWAS, for the developing countries, and last but not least Günter Stock, President of the All European Academies.

It is interesting to note that TWAS has its headquarters in Italy, in Trieste, as well as the secretariat of the IAP network, and both receive essential financial support from our country. This is a clear indication, also considering the choice of a city like Trieste, a historical crossroad between East and West, North and South, between Land and Sea, that Italy is a country open to dialogue, in the belief that science and culture can favour a mutual understanding between peoples and the spread of civilization.

To conclude we are grateful to the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Dario Franceschini and to the Minister of Economy, Pier Carlo Padoan who, in attending this Conference, demonstrate their appreciation to Lincei's commitment to promote culture, knowledge and research. We finally wish to express our warmest gratitude to the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, who, in the wake of the unremitting consideration offered to the Lincei by our Heads of State will receive the Presidents and Vice Presidents of the national Academies and Networks at the end of this Conference.