



## ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026 CLOSING CEREMONY

### REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT ROBERTO ANTONELLI

Mr. President of the Republic, dear Ambassadors, Authorities, dear Fellows, Ladies and Gentlemen,

first of all, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the President of the Republic for his presence today, as every year, at the closing session of the Lincean academic year, in which the Prize of the President of the Republic, the Minister of Culture, the Accademia dei Lincei and the Antonio Feltrinelli Prizes will be awarded: the most important prizes at national level in terms of value, articulation, prestige and excellence of the award winners.

The main axes of my report will cover four interlinked themes: peace, Europe, scientific research and the path taken by the Academy to address these problems.

I would have liked to start with the presentation of the Lincean activities, but for several years this ceremony has been marred by the presence of the wars taking place in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. We recognise that every day we are powerless in the face of the massacres and immense disasters that every war, these wars, bring with them, to the point of almost determining a habituation of all of us to a state of desolation and human, ethical, cultural and political degradation, which after the Second World War we no longer believed could be repeatable in these dimensions and with such indifference to human life and its values. It has come to threaten the destruction of an entire civilisation; an anti-Semitism that was

believed to have been buried after the horrors of the Holocaust has been reactivated and has instead returned to pass through the whole of Europe, with the attribution of responsibility for the Middle Eastern situation to the entire Jewish people and not to the inhumane choices of the government in office.

In the face of such tragedies, it seems more necessary than ever to reaffirm peace as the supreme good and as an essential condition for any other discourse, as the President of the Republic recently reminded us: "Peace is every people's right. This is the meaning of the Resistance" and of the Constitution that emerged from it. "To oppose the violence of man against man. It was in response to this heartfelt appeal that the international community planned, with the UN, to aspire to free the world from the nightmare of war and, with the design of European unity, to free our continent. [...] Reacting to war between peoples means trusting in common institutions of peace, making them more authoritative and efficient: a commitment today, in this period, all the more indispensable".

Trusting in common institutions of peace. Everyone as they can and with their expertise. This year we have therefore awarded the special Feltrinelli prize for a work of exceptional humanitarian value to the Catholic Parish of the Holy Family of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, as in previous years we had chosen to do for another devastated country, Ukraine. For this reason, at the beginning of the academic year, as part of the cycle of conferences dedicated to the "Future of humanity", we organised the conference *War and Peace*, the Proceedings of which are being printed. During the conference, it was emphasised that no one seems to have come to terms with the growing possibility of a nuclear war, paradoxically trusting in the fact that the very absurdity of a global war makes it impossible, while it is being promoted or used as leverage in international relations as if at a gaming table. The human species, on the other hand, is truly in danger, not only theoretically or rhetorically, since the risk of errors or haphazard initiatives is notoriously high. It follows that in order to achieve peace, everyone's goal, the reasoning must be reversed: instead of continuing to consider war as inevitable, historically and almost genetically, as organic to the human species, it is *peace* that must be *thought of as inevitable*, because wars aim, as their natural effect, at a settlement of peace," as Benedetto Croce wrote to Albert Einstein in 1944, recently reprinted. Peace remains the most difficult to achieve in such a way as to make it stable and lasting, but to start from its inevitability means reconstituting the principles of international law and diplomacy, which are so deeply offended today.

The Academy continues to denounce the dangers of the situation, promoting the international conferences organised by the Working Group for International Security and Arms Control (SICA) chaired by Luciano Maiani, who this year with Alberto Quadrio Curzio commemorated the anniversary of the first atomic bombings with an event of historical and scientific reflection: *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: 80 years*, while for 25 June it organised the conference *Nuclear Proliferation*

/ *Non-proliferation today*, in memory of Francesco Calogero, Secretary General of Pugwash when the organisation was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

For this reason, the Academy devotes continuous attention to *Science Diplomacy* with the active participation in the G7 and G20 of the Academies, thanks to the extraordinary work of the *Foreign Secretary* Cristina Marcuzzo and the *International Relations* Office, with the cycle dedicated to the conferences of the Presidents of the European National Academies on the future of Europe and with the establishment of the Lincean Centre for Research and Scientific Cooperation with China, directed by Patrizio Bianchi.

The greatest attention was obviously paid to Europe, recognising the particular function of the European Union for Italy and for the contemporary world, despite the delays: Europe is a priority commitment for the Academy and represents for the whole world the powerful symbolic meaning of a completed unitary process, for the first time in history, in peace, consensus and development.

A Europe first and foremost convinced of the values that are its own and which it now seems called upon to defend and affirm on its own, without falling into rhetorical self-celebrations and nationalistic and sovereigntist traps. Freedom, equality, brotherhood, justice, respect for the person, democracy, the rule of law, dignity, citizenship: these are just some of the European values to which we are dedicating our work for the celebration of the Treaties of Rome of 1957. For the beginning of 2027 we have two conferences planned, *What future for Europe? Values, institutions, competences* and *Literature and values of Europeans*, to help orient the process of European unification towards that pragmatic federalism made necessary by the distances within the Union and by the need to re-establish a new order in international relations. We must also thank the European Commission (chaired by Silvana Sciarra), which with Vice-President Ignazio Visco organised this year, in preparation for the event, conferences and seminars with Giuliano Amato, Massimo Cacciari, Piero Cipollone, Yves Mény, Gianfranco Pasquino, Vittorio E. Parsi, Eleanor Spaventa. We held the conferences on Europe, due to their importance, in the cycle reserved for the Lincean conferences on Thursdays, where this year we were also able to listen to the first president of the Court of Cassation, Pasquale D'Ascola, the senator and associate Elena Cattaneo and Daniele Franco, former Director General of the Bank of Italy and Minister of Economy and Finance.

The future of Europe will also depend on the scientific and cultural independence that will be able to be guaranteed in the face of the impact of artificial intelligence, a technological innovation comparable in overall impact to that of the steam engine, electricity or information technology. The Academy, together with the National Academies of France, Germany and Spain, has asked the European Union to establish a European Centre for AI capable of competing with those in the United States and China in terms of investment and commitment of researchers. Giorgio Parisi has become a decisive promoter, and the rector of IULM Valentina Garavaglia has thoroughly understood its fundamental value:

“this is a choice that goes far beyond scientific research: it means investing in a true European sovereignty of knowledge, capable of combining innovation, independence and democratic responsibility”.

We dedicated all the institutional conferences on Fridays to the impact of artificial intelligence in the Natural Sciences and in the Social Sciences and Humanities, from linguistics to archaeology, biology to economics, with Andrea Moro, Roberto Navigli, Ben Lehner, Ignazio Visco, retracing with Fabiola Gianotti the history of CERN as a European model of leadership in science and values. The second of the annual conferences of the cycle “The future of humanity”, after *The food of the future*, coordinated by Paolo Costantino, will be dedicated to the *Digital society in the era of artificial intelligence*, while every year an *Italian Research Day* will be held on 15 February, the anniversary of the birth of Galileo Galilei, father of modern science and one of our founding fathers. It will be dedicated to illustrating to students and citizens the main scientific discoveries that took place the previous year in Italy, Europe and the world, also analysing the general impact of individual innovations.

In the recent Teha-Global Innosystem Index 2026 survey, the need to “Define a National Technology Policy oriented towards Emerging Technologies”, to “Adopt a *National STEM Strategy* to bridge the skills gap with respect to more developed countries”, to “Strengthen collaboration between universities and companies and enhance the career of researchers” and to “Augment technology transfer to transform research into innovation” was reiterated. These are all aspects to which we have paid particular attention, with detailed documents from the Research and University Commissions (chaired by Annalisa Rosselli and Guido Martinelli): first of all for the reform of recruitment and Anvur, with the training-update work for teachers carried out by the Fondazione Lincei for schools (to which, moreover, the Ministry of Education and Merit for three years has not assigned the guaranteed contribution since its establishment) and with the recent project of the *Metamuseum* of science configured as a National Research Centre, directed by Carlo Di Castro.

As always, we have expressed our views in this regard, sometimes successfully (as in the case of the simplification of procedures for the purchase of scientific material), but still in a negative framework for the future, despite recent positive initiatives by the MUR and the contribution of the NRRP: our investments in research and development in 2025 have been 1.37% of the GDP, compared to almost three times that amount in Germany, France and Austria and compared to 1.41% in 2022. We are waiting to definitively understand what resources will be dedicated from a strategic point of view so as not to disperse the positive things achieved with the NRRP and how it intends upon intervening to distinguish valuable online universities from those that only produce diplomas, an issue that unfortunately also calls into question the responsibility and commitment of Anvur.

With regard to the need to develop relations between research and industry for the transfer of innovation in industrial processes, Vice-President Carlo Doglioni

and President of the Friends of the Lincei Umberto Quadrino are working with Confindustria for an agreement that will lead to the creation of an Agency similar to the German *Fraunhofer Gesellschaft*, an institution capable of guaranteeing excellent results in the transfer of research results into production. It seems that both at the industrial and political level it has not yet been understood that every euro invested in research – as has been ascertained – produces, depending on the country, from 5 to 10 euros of economic return. We also regret to say that it has not been possible to stem the exodus abroad of the best Italian researchers (whose training has cost Italy hundreds of thousands of euros), not compensated by immigration of the same level, which is very small. It is not only the economic loss, but the serious haemorrhage of minds formed here and welcomed abroad that makes national research policy dramatic and incomprehensible. In its annual report, ISTAT has recently re-certified it, as it has re-certified a frightening drop in the birth rate, denouncing an almost irreversible decline that calls for an overall reflection: 350,000 births compared to about one million deaths. Industrial decline and drop in productivity, despite many companies of international excellence, the impossibility for young people and graduates to find a job that lives up to their training and expectations, low wages compared to advanced countries; all of this demands profound structural interventions on the entire Italian production system, unable to absorb the number of graduates that is however quite low compared to developed European countries.

What other initiatives has the Academy undertaken with respect to this situation? In addition to the previous proposals, culminating in the *EU's Twenty-Year Programme for Public Research*, drawn up by the research group coordinated by Ugo Amaldi and then also transmitted to President Draghi for his report to the Union, we have tried to further expand the communication of the Fellows' research and relations with public institutions and Italian society, recognising communication and dialogue with all citizens, and especially with young people, as a fundamental aspect of the Lincean mission.

International seminars, conferences and conventions, often by holders of the most important international prizes, starting with the Nobel Prize, have spanned the entire academic year: on average two to three events each week, thanks also to the sacrifice of the officials, whom I would like to thank for their competence and dedication. It is an intense activity that cannot be listed analytically and for which I refer to the folder distributed. I will limit myself to just mentioning a few.

For the Physical Sciences, the conferences organised by Massimo Inguscio, *Fermi Legacy in Low Energy Physics*, by Giulio Ottonello, *Birth of a new ocean in the region of the Red Sea-Horn of Africa*, by the Health Commission, with the coordination of Carlo Patrono: *Early years interventions to tackle childhood obesity and promote life-long health*; *The reform of differentiated autonomy and the Essential Levels of Health Services (LEP)* and (with the Bioethics Commission) *Inequalities in Access to Paediatric Care*. The conferences organised with the support of the Fondazione Donegani, curated by Gaetano Guerra (*Micro and nanoplastics: impact, traceability, mitigation strategies*),

Vincenzo Aquilanti and Gianfranco Pacchioni (*1925: from quantum numbers to the periodic table. A revolution in chemistry, Quantum chemistry a hundred years after the equation of Schrödinger and Avogadro and Cannizzaro between intuition and systematisation: birth and development of the modern conception of the atomic structure of matter*). Many events are obviously interdisciplinary, starting with those of the *Centro Interdisciplinare Linceo Giovani (Aby Warburg and the Global Renaissance. One hundred years after the conference on Sphaera barbarica (1925-2025)* and of the temporarily transferred fellows of the Segre Centre: *Climate change and human health; Algebraic geometry in Europe in the nineteenth century: results, history, culture and society; Have you ever wondered why we "Sapiens" are different from chimpanzees, bonobos, Denisovans and Neanderthals?*. As always, we have dedicated an international conference to Environment Day (*Environmental law 40 years after the establishment of the Ministry of the Environment*, and one to Water (*Hydrology and health*), both coordinated by Bruno Carli.

For the Social Sciences and Humanities, we concluded our participation in the 2025 Jubilee celebrations with the conferences *Between East and West. Pilgrims to the Tombs of the Apostles* and *The Time of Devotion - the books of hours*, while more recently the initiatives of the China Centre (*China: culture and science. Perspectives of collaboration*) and the Fondazione Caetani, *Islamic arts and Heritage in Italy*, after the conclusion of the exhibition dedicated to *The Prince and Islam. Leone Caetani and the Accademia dei Lincei*. More recently, the conferences for the 100th anniversary of the birth of Giovanni Spadolini and on *Thomas Aquinas, philosopher*, coordinated by Pasquale Porro and Loris Sturlese, to commemorate the seven hundredth anniversary of his death. As every year, we have organised with the Equal Opportunities Commission, among the initiatives for gender equality, a day dedicated to *Women and girls in science* and, with the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World, the conference *Sustaining Knowledge During Crises: Gender and Displacement in Science*. Three conferences of literature and criticism: *Literature and history after the Second World War: Antonio La Penna*, coordinated by Gianpiero Rosati; *How the classics are born: the manuscripts of Italian literature*, coordinated by Marco Mancini, Matteo Motolese and Emilio Russo; *Aleksandr Veselovskji in the human sciences of the modern and contemporary era*, coordinated by Mario Capaldo, who re-addressed, in a meeting with colleagues from the Russian Academy of Sciences, the importance of a crucial figure also for the culture of the second half of the twentieth century.

The multiplication of the Lincean commitments, not only in terms of research but also in terms of dissemination, would not have been possible without the significant reforms of the Academy carried out in the last fifteen years, starting with the Fondazione Lincei for schools, the establishment of the Feltrinelli Youth Prize, reserved for researchers under the age of 40, the multi-year project of the *Triptych of Italian Ingenuity* and the development of the Lincean Commissions and the International Relations Office. Some have changed the very function of the Academy, promoting its modernisation and substantial rejuvenation: increase in

the number of fellows to 120 for each category (720 in total, including nationals, correspondents and foreigners), almost total equalisation between nationals and correspondents, indicative limit of maximum age at 65 for appointment as corresponding fellow.

With the post-doctoral *Lincean School*, presented this week to the convened Classes, reserved for young PhDs, aimed at encouraging the permanence in Italy of the best talents and creating new scientific and managerial profiles of excellence, a path begun with the *Centro Interdisciplinare Linceo Giovani* has been completed, with the upcoming establishment of the *Collegium*, which brings together all the fellows of the *Centro Linceo Giovani* whose six years provided for by the statute have expired, and with the birth of new Lincean Research Centres.

Thus a large community of researchers is configured in solidarity intergenerationally, continuously renewed and inserted within the Present and attentive to the needs of Italian society, while respecting the tradition of the Academy and everything that has made it a cultural institution of reference over the centuries, in particular after the refoundation by Quintino Sella, which we will celebrate next year, together with the centenary of another great Italian scientist, Alessandro Volta, and of a great President of the Lincean Class of Moral Sciences and later President of the Republic, Luigi Einaudi.

The Accademia dei Lincei, compared to the other great European sisters which, thanks to substantial resources, can afford much higher interventions for the benefit of research and young researchers, enjoys far less state funding (3 million compared to 180 million of the British Royal Society, for example). This could also be understood as a deficit of political culture and planning of Italian society, although it is readily achievable. If we can carry out so many initiatives and award so many prizes, such as the Feltrinelli International Prizes, the so-called Italian "Nobels", and others that are very important not only in terms of prestige but also in terms of resources, we owe it to the generosity of Antonio Feltrinelli and many other benefactors (to whom we will dedicate a special plaque this year) who, with their legacies, sought to recognise the importance of the Lincean function. To continue on this path, which we believe is necessary for Italian society, given that the Academy is the only major Italian scientific and cultural institution completely autonomous from political power, it is now necessary that this function be fully recognised also on a material as well as an ideal level, while in the last two years we have had a 10% decrease in the state funding budget.

Thanks to the exhibitions held in Villa Farnesina and in the National Library of the Lincei and the Corsini Library, we have also been able to count on a segment of self-financing used for an intense interdisciplinary scientific and dissemination activity, aimed at citizens and especially at young people and students. We owe to Antonio Sgamellotti, who leaves behind an indelible legacy, —just as we mourn yesterday's passing of one of our greatest members, Natalino Irti— the foundation of the Villa Farnesina Study and Research Centre and the realisation of the first dialogues between historical heritage and contemporary art, culminating this year

with *Gianfranco Baruchello. Possible worlds*, curated by Carla Subrizi. At the same time, the enhancement of the Villa's historical heritage has been further strengthened with the exhibition, at the Italian Cultural Institute in New York, *Raphael and the Colours of the Antique in the Villa Farnesina*, also testimony to Antonio Sgamellotti's scientific and creative commitment, and with the very recent book *Villa Farnesina and its gardens*, edited by Lucia Tomasi, also aimed at the wider public, while the *Artesia* programme continues, focused, through art, on the well-being and inclusiveness of vulnerable people.

The Auditorium of the Villa hosted the exhibitions *On the Paths of the Jubilee. Pilgrims, Trains, Popes* (in agreement with Ferrovie dello Stato italiane and with the contribution of Intesa Sanpaolo, as the first chapter of the new three-year programme) and *The Imperial Palace in Beijing: historical footage, artists and artisans from the Forbidden City* (for the first time in Europe, in agreement with the Museum of the Forbidden City), also aimed at the general public, such as the cycle *The Academy meets*, opened this year by Renzo Arbore, while in parallel with the conference, the exhibition *How the classics are born. The manuscripts of Italian literature* was held. Next year we are organising an exhibition for the anniversary of the Sack of Rome: the protagonists will be the graffiti left by the Landsknechts in the Villa, their neighbourhood during the sack, and recently discovered thanks to a painstaking new restoration. A programme that would not have been possible without the contribution of the Friends of the Lincei and the competence and passion of the Villa's conservator, Virginia Lapenta.

The other pole in which scientific research and openness to the general public have unfolded in many initiatives was the Corsini Library, home to four exhibitions running parallel to major Lincean conferences, organised thanks to the competence and passion of the Director, Marco Guardo, the curator of the printed materials Ebe Antetomaso, Alessandro Romanello and high-level officials: *The Prince and Islam* (8 May-29 June 2025); *All of Italy in flames and fire. The time of the battle of Pavia* (22 October-21 November 2025); *The Time of Devotion* (12 December 2025-15 February 2026, exceptional collection, for the first time, of over 50 manuscripts of illuminated books of hours); *Intersections* (12 March-12 June 2026), accompanied by the installation by Maestro Gianandrea Gazzola of the same title. *Intersections* was opened on the occasion of the inauguration of the Academy's Digital Library, which offers telematic access to the digitised and metadated heritage of all the Lincean manuscripts up to the fifteenth century and, in collaboration with the Central Institute for Graphics, which we thank again, of all the drawings of the Corsini collection owned by the Academy, as well as all the Lincean publications from 1871 to the present day. It was created thanks to NRRP funds and to the care of our Fellow Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, to whom we owe special thanks for having completed such a complex and burdensome commitment on time. For two years we have been working, thanks also to the support of the Ministry of Culture, on the conference and exhibition *The Queen of Culture: Christina of Sweden*, a celebration of the fourth centenary of the birth of the

queen, who lived in Palazzo Corsini (then Riario) for thirty years, making it the seat of a court and collections of art and books among the most celebrated in Europe. It will mark the opening of the next academic year.

The publications of the Academy deserve a special chapter, from the monographs of the Fellows to the Proceedings of the conferences (now also in agreement with the Italian Encyclopedia), to the catalogues of the exhibitions (a total of about fifty: listed in the folder), including the magazines, among which an honourable mention must be reserved for the *Rendiconti Lincei. Scienze fisiche e naturali* which this year has been included, thanks to the dedication of Vincenzo Aquilanti, among the journals with the greatest scientific impact in the world.

If the reforms and reorganisation of the Academy have made this programme possible, all this would not have been achieved without the full scientific-cultural understanding and solidarity between Presidents and Vice-Presidents in office in recent years (from Lamberto Maffei to Alberto Quadrio Curzio and Giorgio Parisi, from Maurizio Brunori to Carlo Doglioni). And without the support of the Commissions of the Academy, their Presidents and the Friends of the Lincei with their extraordinary President, Umberto Quadrino, whom I would like to thank together with all the current members of the President's Council and the Foreign Secretary, Cristina Marcuzzo: Antonio Gambaro, Paolo Costantino, Alessandro Roncaglia, Vincenzo Aquilanti, Francesca Matteucci, Andrea Giardina.

Last but not least, a special thanks to the Chancellor, Dr. Francesco Paolo Fazio, truly excellent, to the Head of Press Office to the secretariat of the Presidency with Drs. Marcella Marsili and Ilaria Bonincontro, to Dr. Paolo Dramis and to all the offices of the Administration, without whose competent and supportive contribution the Academy could not live.

And thank you all for your kind attention and patience.