



Commissioner Janez POTOČNIK

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- I am glad that I can conclude this part of my 5 years as Commissioner with the first public product of ERAB and I am very pleased to learn your work is slowly finding its way into the ERA policy circles, inside and outside the EC.
- One recommendation has already found its way into the President's new programme, namely that of nominating a *Chief Scientific Advisor*.
- I am very pleased by your call for a new Renaissance as it responds completely to what I asked you to do: to think long term and outside the box. And that is indeed what we need to do in our science and research policies if we want to be able to tackle the challenges our societies are facing.
- This concept of a new renaissance also resonates well with what I observe as a trend to change our thinking on where and how our societies have to go. Over the last year we heard fundamental new avenues proposed by for example the policies of President Obama (“change we can”), the interesting developments we see in China (green energy) as

well as initiatives in Europe like those of president Sarkozy to replace GDP indices by Gross Welfare Product indices.

- They all point in the same direction: if we want to keep our standards of living high for all people and making sure that next generations can be as hopeful about the future as we have been in previous decades, we will need to do things differently.
- That is for me what the “New Renaissance” is all about: give hope for a better future, by using our brains and creativity, and thus our science, in new ways.
- Therefore your view on the role science and research must play is rightly so radical and indeed outside of the box of “how we used to do things”. Your 30 recommendations to make this new renaissance in science and research happen by 2030, are clearly very ambitious. They are laudable and achieving each one of them will be a major milestone in the realisation of ERA.

- Let me pick up a few of your recommendations:
  - to double the EU's share of ERA-wide public, non-military research funding by 2030;
  - to gear a third of public non-military research to grand societal challenges;
  - to spend up to three times as much as in 2005 on its higher education or 3.3% of GDP;
  - to devote 50% of EU research funding to frontier, high-risk research and development;
  - to increase Europe's share of top-ranked universities up to 40%;
  - to triple the share of the EU budget devoted to research by 2030.
  
- These recommendations resonate with my own pre-occupation to increase our research efforts in Europe, to bring private and public players closer together in this effort, to promote more excellence and risk-taking. They are all necessary if we want Europe to be a key player by 2030.
  
- But clearly it will not be easy to achieve each of them and some of the recommendations will need more operational detail in order to put them into practice. I thus welcome very

much that you will devote your next full year to thinking those through and I am therefore particularly curious what you will propose to the next commissioner in order to make this view reality.

- I can only encourage you to be creative again in the year ahead. In particular in addressing the key question which lies before you in the year ahead, now that you have your overall picture:

**What policies & instruments does Europe need to develop, abolish or invent to realise our common dream, a dynamic and open ERA by 2030? But also: are we really making progress in realising this ERA?**

- This is not only about how to make best use of the existing ERA policy initiatives. It is not only about what role EU research and innovation will need to play after 2010 in the post-Lisbon area. It is certainly not only about how a new FP8 could contribute to realising our vision. It is also about how best to mobilise all actors to subscribe to and support this vision, and to actively engage in its realisation. As ERAB you represent a very wide basis of stakeholders and therefore could play a very important role in this respect.

- The ERAB conference under the Spanish Presidency should be directed towards particularly engaging those (younger) generations that by 2030 will be in charge of research and science in Europe. I am pleased to learn that this is indeed the intention.
- You know I always encouraged you to act and speak outside the box which Brussels is. Now that you will focus on concrete implementation, this will be even more important. I therefore welcome very much that you invited representatives of the key players in the ERA to attend this launch. I am convinced they want to go a long way into the direction of a new Renaissance and I am also convinced that they want to join the debate.
- Finally, I want to thank you not only for this ERAB vision, but also for the action you have taken and the advice you have given in the last year.
- Your support for our proposal for a Council Regulation on a Community legal Framework for European Research Infrastructures (ERI) was very helpful in finally achieving a

compromise on the important issue of VAT exemption. And your input to the FP7 progress report was also very appreciated (and published as part of the working document accompanying the report). It would be good to see more of this advice.

**I thank you again for your advice and your work. I should have installed you earlier in my term. But I will be around in the coming years and I will go on watching your work. You can count on me to support you where I can. Good luck!**