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Rector of the University of Trieste

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the third edition of the DIAnet International School in Gorizia. While the first two editions in 2013 and 2014 focused on interdisciplinary methods and on the role of natural heritage in the framework of the sustainable development of the Danube region, the 2015 edition will be dedicated to cultural heritage.

I am particularly glad to welcome you all here in Gorizia for this event that stresses the international vocation of Gorizia in a European environment. When we talk about cultural heritage and sustainable development, we touch a crucial issue, which is related to several very important topics in today's world. In other words, the topic is multidisciplinary. The fact that in this School biologists work together with social scientists, physicists and chemists is extremely positive, which is one of the main features of the University of Trieste.

I think that for too many years, in Europe, we have developed our higher education by focusing on single disciplines while the big world's emergencies should be tackled by interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinarity.

I discussed this matter with some other Rectors at the European University Association (EUA) and we all agreed that the right place to tackle multidisciplinarity is in the third level of higher education, i.e. the PhD level. Multidisciplinarity would then be able to permeate from the PhD level into the Master and Bachelor levels.

Another positive aspect of the DIAnet International School is that it involves a lot of interaction among students and participants. I know from last year's experience that you will be clustered into small groups and will work on specific projects, an aspect that I find extremely interesting and very challenging.

All this work is strongly related with the new EU programme Horizon 2020 and we may say that this edition – just like the previous two – is paving the way

to our participation to Horizon 2020 by enhancing collaborations between the universities involved in this project. As soon as you get back to your countries and to your universities, you will promote the connections you'll have established here, enhance our collaboration and prepare solid projects to be sent to the European Commission.

I am particularly glad to be here on behalf of the University of Trieste because I really want to share with you our willingness to become more and more international, as we have already stated several times in different occasions. My collaborators and I have personally worked in setting up some good relationships with all the universities of our neighbour countries: Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, and many others. We have made a series of official visits and I am sure that – at the end – all this work will produce results in terms of concrete projects that we will be able to submit to the European Union.

Thank you very much and keep up the good work.