

**RESEARCH DAY ITALY-SLOVENIA
VIPAVA, 16 APRIL 2019**

It gives me a great pleasure to be here today for the third edition of the Italy – Slovenia research day, a very useful opportunity to make further progress in our bilateral relations in the field of S&T, a process that the Italian Embassy in Slovenia is actively contributing to.

This meeting is also the best way to celebrate in Slovenia the second edition of the Italian Research Day, the initiative conducted simultaneously worldwide by the Italian government, that allows the Italian Cultural Centre in Slovenia to support financially its realization.

I wish now to express my deepest appreciation for the activities of the bilateral working group led by Dr. Tomaž Boh and Prof. Maurizio Fermeglia, that have selected the topics for today's event and invited rapporteurs and participants on both sides.

In this framework, let me recall that the bilateral Work Program on scientific-technological collaboration signed in 2017 is being implemented through the Joint Projects for the period 2018-2020. It finances the mobility costs for researchers involved in projects focusing on the commonly selected areas: ICT, blue growth, physics and astrophysics, technologies applied to agriculture, forestry and food security, cultural heritage.

More recently in Ljubljana a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministries of Education on Cooperation in the Fields of High Performance was signed in order to further the scientific and technological cooperation on the basis of equal partnership and mutual benefit in such field. The Parties intend to develop common activities of national and joint infrastructures, competence centers, research, development and innovation projects and initiatives in the national, bi-lateral and European context.

Last November the Jožef Stefan Institute in Ljubljana hosted with prominent speakers from Italy and Slovenia the first presentation of TOWARDS ESOF2020. One

of the main goals of the EuroScience Open Forum in Trieste will be a permanent and efficient network in the central and eastern European countries to reinforce positive interactions and transfer among research, institutions, industries, policy and society.

I would like to mention also that in the conference Italy & Slovenia, Partnership in Investment & Innovation held in Rome on the 14th of February a round table discussion was dedicated to Research & Innovation with the participation also of the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development (ENEA) and the Jožef Stefan Institute.

Its also worth noting that recently we have opened new avenues of cooperation among our two countries in the field of aerospace. Arianespace has been chosen by the Slovenian Centre of Excellence for Space Sciences and Technologies to launch the NEMO-HD microsat on the Vega launch vehicle, the microsatellite for Earth monitoring and remote observation in high-definition, capable of performing real-time imaging and video streaming. Vega is part of the Arianespace launcher family and the industrial prime contractor for Vega is AVIO, based in Colleferro, Italy. I am also proud to inform that in Rome on the 12th of March 2019 the Countries involved in the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Project have come together for the signature of the international treaty establishing the intergovernmental organization that will oversee the delivery of the world's largest radio telescope.

To talk about science in Vipava has a special meaning, since this place gives us the opportunity to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the death of Leonardo Da Vinci, an event of global significance. In fact, according to Prof. Alessandro Vezzosi, that a few years ago presented in Maribor the Slovenia edition of his book on Infinite Leonardo ("Neskónčni Leonardo"), the great genius from Vinci was also in this place to study the establishment of defensive systems against the Ottoman incursions, as he did a few kilometers from here in Gradisca d'Isonzo / Gradišče ob Soči, as well documented in the newly opened municipal museum.

In the light of the above, I believe that all the conditions are met to have today productive discussions and deliberations that will continue next year in Trieste in the framework of ESOF 2020.