



FINAL COMMUNIQUE (1)

CEI Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology (Trieste, September 19, 2012)

Ministers, State Secretaries, Deputy Ministers and/or their Representatives from Member States of the Central European Initiative (*), together with High Officials from the European Commission, attended the CEI Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology - held in Trieste (Italy) on September 19, 2012 - under the chairmanship of Mr. Sulima Yevhen, First Deputy Minister of Education and Science, Youth and Sport on behalf of the CEI Ukrainian Presidency.

On the site of the Synchrotron facility (Elettra) and the Free Electron Laser laboratory (Fermi), the first agenda item was discussed, concerning the establishment of the C-ERIC Consortium with the aim to facilitate the access of CEI Member States' scientific communities to these state-of-the-art facilities. This was followed by a visit to the two abovementioned laboratories.

In this context, the Italian Minister of Education, University and Research, Prof. Francesco Profumo, informed the participants that, since the launch of the C-ERIC Consortium on the occasion of last year's Ministerial Meeting (19 October 2011), the Italian Government has completed all procedures according to the European legislation. The Statute of the Consortium was submitted to the DG for Research and Innovation of the European Commission for its final approval, which is expected before the end of 2012. In this respect, the Ministers and other participants expressed unanimous appreciation for the Italian initiative and for the very important progress achieved in less than one year as a relevant contribution to the strengthening of the European Research Area (ERA).

Furthermore, they remarked that already nine CEI Member States formally committed themselves to participate in the C-ERIC Consortium and wished that its membership may rapidly increase, targeting the entire CEI membership. Moreover, they highlighted the existing opportunities in the framework of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), as well as those that will arise from a future similar strategy concerning the Adriatic-Ionic region.

The Ministers and other participants specifically endorsed the activities carried out in this respect by the CEI Secretariat in close cooperation with Elettra and Fermi Laboratories, expressing *inter alia* their satisfaction for the contribution provided by the CEI Secretariat through its active participation in the Steering Group of EUSDR Priority Area 7 (to develop the Knowledge Society through research, education and information technologies).

At the Headquarters of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) jointly managed by UNESCO and IAEA, the Ministers and other participants discussed the second agenda item, i.e. the opportunities offered by the activities of the ICTP to the CEI Member States and their respective scientific communities. They acknowledged that the ICTP has emerged as an institution of worldwide excellence for Research and Education in the field of physics and related disciplines since its creation almost 50 years ago, and emphasized the traditionally intense cooperation with all CEI Member States. The Ministers and other participants expressed the wish to further extend such cooperation in the future.

(*) Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine.

In this context, and in relation to the other institutions of excellence belonging to the CEI Science and Technology Network, it was mentioned that the EU co-funded CEI Research Fellowship Programme (CERES), sponsored and managed by the CEI Secretariat, has been a particularly useful instrument to support mobility of scientists from CEI Member States and to enhance their participation in the activities of the Network and of the “Trieste Science System”, as well as to develop their own scientific careers. The Ministers and other participants wished that this programme may be renewed next year.

As a third agenda item, the Ministers and other participants evaluated the activities promoted by the CEI Secretariat to implement the recommendation of the “Trieste Declaration” (unanimously adopted by the Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology last October 2011) in the field of Next Generation Biofuels. Specific attention was paid to the prospects for innovation and all aspects related to diversified biomass supply in the context of a Bio-based Economy.

Based on the conceptual framework elaborated in the CEI Bloomberg Report, the Ministers and other participants endorsed the activities planned by the CEI Secretariat to provide CEI Member States with appropriate inputs in terms of applied research targets for a more efficient Next Generation Biofuels production, also through the participation in the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. They expressed the wish that cooperation between the CEI Secretariat and the European Commission may be further intensified in programmes and projects related to the development of a strong Bio-based Economy, giving mandate to the CEI Secretariat to specifically follow, on behalf of the Member States, the development of the Public-Private Partnership (“Biobased for Growth”) emerging in Brussels at the joint initiative of the European Commission and of leading European Industries in this sector.

To this end, they recommended the CEI Secretariat to promote a trust fund to support relevant activities in the near future and to provide seed money for the participation in EU-funded projects in this field.

Finally, also on the basis of last year’s and this year’s experience, and in view of the perfect organization by the CEI Secretariat, the Ministers and other participants unanimously invited Hungary to convene in Trieste the next Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology during its Presidency.

Upon a proposal by the Chair, Ministries and other participants complimented the CEI Secretariat for the perfect organization of the Ministerial Meeting and for the outstanding activities conducted so far concerning Next Generation Biofuels and for those already planned for the future.