**Transcription Keynote Speech Prof. Luigi Berlinguer, Conservatorio di Vicenza, 20th April 2016, AEC EPARM Forum**

As ministers of higher education in Europe, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and France, we once said that we could not go on with the organization of our higher education in the as way it previously was, that we could not continue to keep the system of higher education closed inside, without any kind of language or a backing of some philosophical research. If you want to have a good education, its activity is always international, never local. Education systems are dealing with the problem that education and research are based on different cultural roots. It is very hard to organize them in a European common market of intellectuals and professionals. Yet a European common market, in the form of either a monetary common market or an economic common one, has been built before. And this is the case, because, in my opinion, intellectuals are really jealous of their environment and their power. Traditions are influencing the way culture is still taught on a European and a higher education level, which means absolutely fragmented. And fragmentation is the real enemy of Europe. Higher education is still fragmented in spite of the trend of youth to search Europe, to look for work and labor outside of the small environment in which they were born and raised. It is a necessity of life to have a European higher education system.

We were 4 ministers representing the 4 governments of 4 countries. To lay the basis for a European higher education system, we should have passed through the European institutions. First of all the Commission, because it is up to the Commission to come up with initiatives as far as any kind of European activity is concerned, and then the Parliament and then the Council: the three institutions of Europe. We discussed this problem before deciding, and we decided not to pass through European institutions, because we were sure that if we would have decided to pass through European institutions, it would have taken decades just to start such an idea. Resistances within the countries were so strong to be able to stop the initiatives of their own governments and representatives in the European Parliament. So we decided to start what we have later called the Bologna Process. We met in Paris at the 800th anniversary of the University of Paris and the Paris higher education culture, at the centre of the world. It was a great feast, a great salutation, and we created together the idea of a common itinerary with intense exchange between systems of higher education belonging to single member states. We signed a charter, an agreement, and then we decided to pass through European institutions. It was necessary. Later I proposed to my friend, the French minister Claude Allegre, at the time being, to go to Paris to celebrate and sign this first step. The next step was Bologna, because it’s the most ancient university in Europe, which means in the world. And this is the reason of the Bologna Process name, with the idea of having a common process, to give our students the opportunity to follow higher education courses that are converged in a common market and a common organization. So we asked every member state of Europe to sign a new charter in Bologna, adapted to the amendments of the former 4 members, and we got the signature of all European member states. It was a miracle. But it is a necessary decision for the future of higher education. I’m also sure that one of the reasons this happened was that they were not completely aware of what they were signing. Because after that, the reaction of part of the academic corps was very rough; it was difficult to present ideas or other initiatives in meetings, I don’t mean dangerous physically, but politically, because they thought that we wanted to “kill” the European tradition of university. Absolutely not true. The splendid tradition of Bologna, Paris, Salamanca, Coimbra, Heidelberg, Louvain, Oxbridge, and so on the mentioned “university”, was the very – let us say – model, inspiration in the frame of modern Europe. But when you introduce new ideas you always encounter resistance. Unquestionably, you must take it into account. But we had to consider that for some of the ideas introduced and signed in the new charter of the Bologna Process it was difficult to implement them completely. Some countries were late. There were differences particularly between humanities and science, because scientific work was more adapted and accustomed to run in international exchange programmes, because science is a field where more money can be captured to finance research. These resistances and contradictions were part of the reason that the process moved. One of the reasons of the adjustment was evaluation, because when you introduce something new, you must always have in mind to evaluate what you are doing, its concrete results, because it’s new, because you don’t know the possible reactions, because you don’t have complete experience in the field that you’re promoting as new. That’s why you must have an organization capable to evaluate academic activity which some countries do and some others refuse to instead. Naturally, no proper activity can exist without evaluation, because otherwise you could fail. This is why quality assurance was one of the pillars of the Bologna Process. Quality assurance, which means to evaluate the process and the results of the process. In the field of quality, it is important not to risk that a new system could produce a defeat of quality. When you’re abandoning your ancient path and you’re building up something new, you must be absolutely convinced that there can’t be higher education without quality, that there can’t be higher education only arranged into an efficiency-necessity. Both, efficiency and quality. That’s why quality assurance managed, in some parts of Europe, mainly Northern countries, to work pretty well. In this way, modern and open politicians were working both for national and European progression.

Let me recall another initiative: credits. In every country we had different systems for the evaluation of students, the evaluation of programmes, and of standards. So there are different ways of giving votes or points, and of promoting or not. The idea of European credits was the idea to unify the system of giving an evaluation of personnel, intellectual results, and studies. Those who were against the idea said: “you mean to transform the university into a bank, because you’re basing it on credit”. We know that it is absolutely another thing. But in the beginning it had some success in the public opinion of academy because we were introducing the slavery of culture to entrepreneurs and banks, because we proposed to use a system of credits, and we could not do without it. This was a delicate point that I wanted to stress.

We also proposed to have something similar for the conservatoires, a European association for them. The point is that diversity (the idea that fragmentation), in the field of art, and in the field of music, is popular. It must be protected. So I know there are many objections to our proposition, because art is the kingdom of freedom: of expression, of personal creativity, of emotion, it is not in the field of logic. In art you don’t copy the reality, you reinvent it: this is art and it belongs to every single person. And in this part of the activity lies freedom, of expressivity, of creation. How to organize it? How do I organize this on a European level? How to organize the idea to have a new fragmentation? Because fragmentation could also be a matter of freedom: you want to be fragmented, you want to be different, diverse more than different. This is true as far as the artistic or intellectual production is concerned. This is true, when you take into account the artist as a person, as a human being, even as a child. Because the artist is a child, and we all were artists once when we were children but growing up eventually we lose it.

This does not mean that we could not face another profile, which is the subject of our discussion here, and of so many organizations. It is not anymore the problem of the Bologna Process, it is the problem of the AEC, the problem of EPARM.

Furthermore we must consider that we have to address the difference between artistic research to produce art and research to examine and identify what artistic activity is. When you produce art you always add a field of research, because you are practicing and inventing everything. And, in addiction, you must consider, in order to get to a good result, if it works or not. It is a good production, a good expression, but it is all up to the artist, so once we mention artistic research we must be careful, because the profile we are talking about now is another one, it is the idea of how it happens. And the very same can be said for the science field, science too is the field of invention, even if you have to prove your invention. It is an invention still. You must try, you must dare when you’re a scientist and when you’re an artist, and as a human being. But when you get there, when you’re producing this activity, in ancient times it was much simpler than now, and some artistic branches were very simple, let’s say very elementary. Not astrophysics, not mathematics, not geometry; ultimately they are the same as modern mathematicians or scientists. But it is not the same thing in chemistry, and it is not the same thing in music, and it is not the same thing as far as science as a whole is concerned. We must know that after the Renaissance in Europe we had two great revolutions: an intellectual, scientific revolution, and a music revolutions. Now, if you compare, as far as music is concerned, what was music then, in a world as rich as the Latin or Greek cultures, and if you compare this to what music is now, you see how small the quantity of instruments was and how simple, how feeble instruments were available to produce music. What music represents in the world now is enormous. We have not only had a revolution, but this revolution has improved quantity and quality. It is not about discovering, but about pointing out relationships between melody and harmony, the complexity of music, not only to sing, not only a song, but a creation, an artistic creation, between the role of art, between the role of an engineer of music, one of the greatest artists of the history of humanity. This is indeed a great change and we have to consider: it was not the same thing during the ancient word. Which, and this is only an example, let’s remember that Galileo was also a musician, that his father was also one of the men who worked on harmony and polyphony. Then Galileo used his scientific process he was working on and adapted it even towards music. And this has been a sort of encounter. The great mathematician in the roman period was important for the link between music and mathematics: Pythagoras.

Nowadays, in the aftermath of the the scientific revolution, humanity has marched further on. And the meeting of Copernic, the meeting of science and some arts and music, has stated an extraordinary step in advance. Our realm of arts now is richer. But what could be richer than Homer or Aristotle? We couldn’t have anybody better now. But over time, scientific and artistic culture have been developed enormously, and in the ancient period the quantity of people who actually occupied themselves with art and studies was not significative. Now we have democracy, which means that we have a field to produce products, intellectual products, and all the conditions that they are developing of art. From a conceptual, intellectual point of view that it is logic, that it could be a sort of science or a field of investigation that wants to study how arts are producing results, which is a research on art, different from the research of the artist that researches just to produce a very important piece of art. That’s a research and study as an artist, and his activity and the complexity of activities. This means that we are progressing. And to organize it here in Vicenza, and within the organization of the AEC, of EPARM, and other organizations, means that we are moving forward. And there is a great intellectual dignity of research on art, artistic research. We have to be proud, we must not fear to lead the path towards new ways, or to feel that some parts of the intellectuality do not like this particular idea. I see at the end, or even now, an alliance between all kinds of research: scientific research, research on science and research on art. I’m sure that there are some profiles and matters that change, that are different, I know. But on what basis? The issue of this alliance is the scientific method, which is the basis of modernity. It is the method that denies any kind of faith, and I’m not talking about religion now, of an attitude towards the truth that is not based on the will to discover and of marching towards the truth, towards what is the basis of the reality. The scientific method now has been experimented with on a great extent and the role of science now follows the method like then. It is another conception. I won’t say an ideology because I don’t like ideologies, because ideologies are dark, they are not bright. Ideologies are not the reality. But in this case I am sure that what they have in common, scientific research and artistic research, is the scientific method: this is something that opens my heart to hope for the future of this discipline. Thank you very much.