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## WELCOME ADDRESS: WHY THE HUMANITIES ARE IMPORTANT

Your Excellency President of Montenegro Filip Vujanovic, Your Eminence Peter Cardinal Turkson, Your Excellency President Emil Constantinescu, Your Excellency President Zhelyu Zhelev, Your Excellencies ambassadors, Your Excellencies ministers in Government of Montenegro, distinguished participants of the Conference *Humanities and the Contemporary World*.

It has been more than a year when we, representatives of European national academies, met in Amsterdam to run General Assembly of ALLEA. It turned out that we have discussed some of the issues of Horizon 2020 and its new trend concerning social sciences and humanities. I have heard, again, during the meeting, a slogan that Europe should be built such that its unity *should be based on diversity*. That slogan is very often heard, even every day in Europe, especially used by politicians. A complex system such as human community in many areas consists of interacting adaptive entities that produce dynamic patterns and structures. Diversity plays a different role in a complex system than it does in a unique equilibrium system. In complex systems, diversity makes fundamental contributions to system performances. Diversity underpins in different ways system level robustness, allowing for multiple responses to external shocks and international adaptations; it provides the seeds for large events by creating outliers that fuel tipping points; it drives novelty and innovation, too. Different kinds of diversity and distinct community compositions and interaction structures determine the amount for maintained diversity within a system. The identity is itself complex and people have multiple identities to draw upon, with certain ones more important depending on the situation. Basically, interactions among our genes, environment, and culture lead to people's identities. Identity is a central concept in diversity, but identity has confounding effects. It creates cognitive differences, which can drive progress while at the same time producing limits that can hinder efforts to benefit. Thus, it is crucial for partners to recount efforts such to understand how to manage diversities to achieve the benefits of diverse perspectives and possible unity.

“Diversity is not only a value and a policy and a commitment, but also a line of inquiry”, explains Michael Cohen. How far it can go is the right question? So, it is needed to estimate: how influenced should be humanities in building unity in system in general, and in particular how they can help in building European unity.

One can understand this issue in another way, too. Should humanities play bigger issue, that they do today in our lives? That what one, personally, should consider as the key issue in own spirituality many tend to recognize as the part of, even, official state policies. For those coming from natural and technical sciences it looks that such understanding of humanities might produce many pitfalls, and it looks unrealistic to accept their such role in building unity. It is, certainly, hard to agree, too, that the case would be treated in the way prof. Asher, one of the former editors of *Science*, told to me when I asked him for the state of art of humanities in USA. He was very crude in saying that no dime would be given for humanities in States in contrary what is happening in Europe.

All the rest what might be matter of interest is how to find the right place and right balance in the contemporary world for all scientific activities. No doubt that many of you would not agree that new values today are generated, at least, even at the first instance by natural and technical sciences. Obviously, we keep constantly ignoring the fact: what changes in our lives have been produced especially by new technologies, and even what it is going to happen.

But, one does not have to forget that it is not possible to build new values just inventing new solutions by natural and technical sciences. Human being is much more complicated than such solutions and it is not always even ready and prepared to accept new solutions, new inventions and new values. Reasons being different, but one of the most important is that human being changes much slower than knowledge in natural and technical sciences. Especially, spirituality is not easy to change every day. Not to mention religion at this moment.

Those all were inputs to me to propose running this conference, what was immediately supported by ALLEA, WAAS, EASA and IAP. I am very much honored on behalf of Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts that we got the chance to organize and host the conference. It is going to be one more very special event held in this room, namely behind the recent conference *Values and XXI century*. They both have brought so eminent scientists and thinkers to Podgorica. No doubt when you gather so excellent people in one room the results will be of interest to all scientific community worldwide. Excellency of the speakers who have come from different professions and different parts of the world guarantee that the conference is going to be very provocative and very successful. I want to thank you all for accepting invitation to participate at this conference and there is no doubt that output of it is very needed in the contemporary world.

Last, but not least, I wish all of you very pleasant stay in Montenegro and at the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Thank you for the attention.