

Prof. Momir DJUROVIĆ, President
Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts

OPENING ADDRESS

*You Excellency Mr. Minister Stijepović, very distinguished participants of the Conference “Research and Development as a Basis for Innovation in Creating the Competitive Region”,
Members of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts,*

We are living in the most complicated and diverse world in the history of mankind. Today, there are 1.2 billion people who are living on less than one dollar per day. In fact, 4 billion people live on less than two dollars per day, and 120 million of children are not in primary schools. There are 800 million people who go to bed hungry every day, while there are already thousands of billionaires. There are 800 million people who are illiterate in the world. At the same time we are facing the challenges, not known earlier, of such intensity that there is very high uncertainty how to solve them and live in the future. Lack of energy, climate change confusion, treatment of waste, relation of big and small, financial and economical crises, unemployment, loss of values are still lacking the answers and need urgent solution. And many of them have been caused by human.

Shaping a better future is easy to say but hard to accomplish. We are not all certain and probably do not agree, today, on the ways how to shape our future, and how we want to measure quality of our better future. Many argue that GDP should not be related to the quality of life or wellbeing. Therefore, there is enough room to redefine better future in relation to what we meant very recently by that term. We have discovered magic word the *competitiveness* – for many the answer to our future. Competitiveness should mean basically more new knowledge in our economy. But we want to build the sustainable society, whatever we consider under that term, Brutland’s or any other definition. But, in this diverse world where many do not plan their future, at least at this moment, on sustainability, the big question is how to be competitive once you want to build your competitiveness based on sustainability.

Human society has gained tremendously from the advancement of the science and technology. Academic research in the physical and biological sciences has vast-

ly broadened our horizons; it has given us a deep insight into the structure of matter and of the universe; it has brought to better understanding of the nature of life and of its continuous evolution. Technology – the application of science – has made fantastic advances that have affected us beneficially in nearly every aspect of life: better health, more wealth, less drudgery, greater access to information.

The continuation of such activities in the twenty-first century will result in an even greater boon to humanity: in pure science – a wider and deeper knowledge in all spheres of learning; in applied science – a more equitable distribution of material benefits, and better protection of the environment. This looks as the only solution in tackling many existing issues as well all those which will come. Although the advancement in science and technology have given human, in some way, too much power over the nature, many earlier mentioned problems are not only still present, but in many ways even exaggerated making, thus, our future every uncertain.

Science has become industry and is driven today by the logic of industry. This has many advantages, but it has its' backdraws, too: research is measured by „production”, publish or perish. Everyone has benefited from science and technology, but not equally. They both have helped to separate the society to rich and poor, to north and south. Research is heavily dependent on the investments. One of the key questions is: is 3% of GDP for research too small for some countries and too big for others? Even such, it is still a dream for many countries. On top, which mechanisms should be practiced in distributing that money? Recently, I was told by a friend of mine, chancellor of one well known British university, that in UK they are thinking of evaluating research not by number of publications and citations, but rather by number of realized patents – innovations. This might look as more straightforward way of encouraging competitiveness by research. Redistribution of knowledge and establishment of network of research institutions instead of centralizing them will have great impetus to competitiveness, especially in South-East European countries. But, these are only two possibilities of engaging research in the function of competitiveness.

Special responsibility goes towards national academies. Being learned societies or at the same time research institution they should all have the same task: to encourage research which will lead to higher degree of competitiveness not only of national economies, but certainly of the European one.

Many of these topics and many more will be discussed today and tomorrow by very prominent speakers. We in Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts are very grateful to all of you who accepted to deliver speech during the Conference on this very important topic. No less appreciation goes to all other participants of this event. We all have to believe that the research we perform will help building competitiveness not only in our societies but in Europe in large, too, such to achieve better future but in any manner sustainable.

Let me ask Prof. Felix Unger to address you in the way he does it usually.