



Commissioner Janez POTOČNIK

***Meeting with representatives of the
European Transport Research Organisations***

"Lyon Declaration on the Implementation of the 2020 Vision for ERA"

Brussels, Berlaymont

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- I really appreciate your support - through this "Lyon Declaration" - to achieving our '2020 Vision' for the European Research Area. Many thanks for your initiative, and for bringing together so many organisations to sign it.
- I would like to see the '2020 Vision' becoming a common reference for national administrations and Parliaments when setting the course of national research policies. The national public research organisations you represent have an essential role in supporting your administrations in this task.
- The role of your European associations is also essential, for example in ensuring cross-border coordination in defining strategic research agendas. I also see you as a kind of "interpretation service" for your members, taking European policies and programmes and analysing what they mean -how they can be translated – into actions in your field.
- I can see from this Declaration that you are doing a great job. You are making sure that your members understand the European policy agenda and its tools and how they can each contribute to collectively addressing our common challenges.
- Implementing the '2020 Vision for ERA' is a long-term goal. But a number of specific initiatives are being launched by the Commission which could have concrete short-term impacts. Your associations could also contribute to development and implementation of some of them. Joint Programming is the most obvious one, and I see you refer to it in the Declaration.
- Last week, the group of high-level national representatives on Joint Programming held its first meeting. Their aim is to set out the priority areas. That is a first political step. However, the subsequent steps of defining and implementing strategic research agendas require the expertise of the scientific community and other relevant stakeholders. That is where you come in.
- Coordination with the relevant European Technology Platforms such as ERTRAC for road transport, ERRAC for rail and WATERBORNE would enable you to share views on your ideas, and perhaps to widen the reach of your "Declaration". More generally, your group would benefit from its enlargement to new stakeholders from all surface transport sectors, including private research organisations and universities.
- The Contribution of Public Research Organisations to the implementation of "Green Cars Initiative" is explicitly stated as one objective of your "Declaration". Research

organisations should play an integral part in public-private partnerships. Look at Clean Sky for example, which brings together not only industry, but also 15 research centres and 17 Universities as members.

- Electrification of urban transport and mobility is a priority for Europe. We hear much at the moment of measures to mitigate the effects of the collapse in demand in the auto industry: government money, scrapping schemes and so on. But we must also look to the future and to make sure that our auto industry is in pole position when demand picks up again.
- That means investing in research, but also making sure that regulations and standards do not act as a barrier to innovation; it means bringing together public authorities to aggregate their procurement and become "launching customers" for innovative solutions; it means joining together these demand and supply side measures. Indeed "green car" is something of a misnomer. We are not just talking about cars, nor cars, vans, busses and lorries. We are talking about an integrated approach to improving logistics and mobility.
- The role of the European transport research community in all of this is to bring together and mobilize the excellence of its research. In a context of further pressure on both private and public research budgets, we need to fight against the fragmentation of our research efforts in Europe. It is essential that economic crisis does not lead to "research nationalism", but to research cooperation.
- Joint Programming and "Green Cars" are therefore two initiatives where your organisations can make a substantial contribution in the very near future. You have obviously understood this fully.
- I see that you are also looking outside Europe, particularly to cooperation with the U.S.A. in the transport area. This is certainly wise. Globalisation of R&D requires a coherent International Cooperation policy framework for both Community and Member States. We are now starting to set the agenda for our future regulatory cooperation with the new US administration, including in the automotive sector. Here we are looking to strengthen cooperation, and to promote international harmonization of vehicle regulations through the U.N. standards in areas of safety and fuel economy.
- I am really looking forward to the TRA 2010 in Brussels next year. I already helped launch the Y.E.A.R. 2010 competition for young researchers in transport in January and I personally share your strong commitment to encouraging young people to embark on a research career.
- I look forward to seeing the prize winners at the TRA, but also to seeing how your working groups are getting on with implementation of '2020 Vision' in the field of transport research.