

Prof. Vittorio Silvestrini, President and founder of Città della Scienza

Mr Tommaso Sodano, Deputy Mayor of Naples

Prof Guido Trombetti, Vice President of the Campania Region

Mr Graziano del Rio, State Secretary to the Prime Minister of Italy

Friends and colleagues

This is a day that I could not miss. Few events are so demanding and so exciting.

And this **Grande Festa de la Reconstruzione de La Città de la Scienza** is one of them!

Thank you so much for inviting Ecsite for this memorable day.

We have here all the Board of Ecsite. They represent hundreds of museums and science centres across the world, and especially in Europe.

They are all very experienced professionals, and they came here to provide not only solidarity but also knowledge and friendship.

As President of Ecsite, this new Città della Scienza is a clear evidence of the vitality of Naples.

But I have to tell you that I am not surprised. I know Vincenzo Lipardi, the Director of Città della Scienza, since I joined this European family of science centres, a long time ago.

He was already known for his strong ideas. When he puts his mind into something, he doesn't let it go. He goes right to the end, and has it done.

He became himself President of this European organization. And I learned a lot from him, and I still do.

I have many things in common with Vincenzo. Not only being President of Ecsite; not only being the Director of a Science Centre in the South of Europe; In fact, we both love Philosophy, we have studied Philosophy

I think that is one of the reasons Vincenzo is always thinking.

And, even more than that, he is always thinking in action, this is what we call: a very dynamic and fruitful praxis.

Let me quote a Portuguese scientist. She is a neuroscientist, and she wrote a fascinating article about science and culture.

Maria de Sousa, her name, finishes this article with a question:

“Have you met a Philosopher today?”

Maybe you need one tomorrow”

Here he is: Vincenzo is always thinking ahead, with a wider vision. But Vincenzo and his outstanding team were not alone. It is a huge team, and I would like to congratulate all of them.

Among them, I would like to emphasize how in all these years it has been a privilege to work with Anne-Marie Bruyas and Luigi Amodio.

This team has always had a very special mentor.

Vittorio Silvestrini, the President of the Idis Foundation, a personality with a mission in life: to take science to the people, to improve scientific culture in Italy, scientific citizenship and innovation, which are the road to prosperity and well-being.

Europe recognized this exceptional work, by awarding him the very prestigious “Descartes Award for Scientific Communication”.

But those who know the ancient history of this region are also not surprised to see the Città rising again ... in the very same place where it always has been.

This is the spirit of Naples and its people. The strength, the capacity to overcome adversity, in very creative ways, as champions for art and culture ...

Here we are surrounded by beauty in a very inspiring city.

What a brave people. And brave leaders too ...

All of us, who work in the field of science centres and museums, we all know how difficult it is to build a science centre, and, much more, to reconstruct one. It is not just about the building, it is not only about exhibitions ... it is a complex technological, scientific, pedagogical challenge.

The major difficulty is to keep a spirit of collaboration among everybody, from ministries, to local government, to scientists, technicians, architects, teachers ... it is a microcosm of society, and it is not easy to manage.

But the Città della Scienza does it. It keeps the collaboration going, at all times. Città della Scienza holds the key to social, cultural and economic development.

Città della Scienza emerges here, again, with a clear mission: To reshape, renew, and improve the quality of life in the Naples region. Its people clearly deserves it.

Thank you.

Rosalia Vargas
President of Ecsite