

Good afternoon,

Prime Minister Kenny,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by adding my voice to those that have already congratulated the Irish Presidency and my colleague Sean Kelly in having organized this very successful conference. The conference has been particularly fruitful as a source of inspiration about how to enhance the long term and global impact of H20020.

Let me also take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the effort that the Irish Presidency has shown in furthering research and innovation at a European level. As rapporteur for the Specific Programme Implementing H2020, I particularly appreciated the commitment of the Irish Presidency and its associated staff in conducting efficient negotiations in the dossier of H2020.

As we approach the end of the negotiations, we are conscious of the need to bear in mind how best to proceed *over the longer term* and how best to ensure *the global impact* of H2020. The conclusions of this conference are an important input to our work.

In this context, two important features were introduced in H2020 by the European Parliament:

* Firstly, we have designed H2020 in such a way as to consolidate the ERA and the international global dimension at the same time. The H2020 will contribute to structure research at a European and global level. Furthermore, H2020 will allow us to bring together actors from diverse scientific domains in order to tackle some of the major global issues with which we are confronted.

Secondly Horizon 2020 should contribute to the strategic long term planning. In this context, it is

important that we bear in mind how to stimulate innovation but also to ensure the longer term implications of our actions so that we prepare ourselves for the innovations of tomorrow.

Greater international cooperation and enhanced long term strategic planning should enable more driven scientific development. Not only will this contribute to heightening the performance of Europe in a global environment, it should also result in our ability to contribute to well-being in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

Thank you very much.