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Mediterranean Emmanuele F.M. Emanuele,
LUISS President Emma Marcegaglia,
Executive Vice President Luigi Serra, Rector Paola
Severino, General Manager Giovanni Lo Storto,
President of the University of Petra Marwan El Muwalla,**

I would like to thank you for inviting me to participate in the launch of this meaningful Mediterranean project.

Let me also commend this important collaboration between Fondazione Terzo Pilastro and the LUISS University, for their profound vision, in extending a spirit of solidarity beyond Italy, to touch the lives of young people in the rest of the Mediterranean.

We must remember that empowering young people through education does not only benefit the individual. It creates a powerful and beneficial transformation in the lives of families and communities, across nations, and in entire regions.

By empowering young people, your project is promoting inclusive participation and active citizenship, strengthening democratic processes which are essential for the healthy functioning of our nations.

Education is the first, and most important step, towards becoming fully empowered and truly responsible citizens.

Let me share with you the inspiring words of Mahatma Gandhi, who, speaking about education, said, “Live as if you were to die tomorrow, but learn as if you were to live forever.”

This is the long-lasting and sustainable effect that your initiative will have across our Mediterranean. Your initiative is not only offering empowerment through higher education. It is also showing the common commitment we all feel, to build a culture of positive peace.

I feel very proud of the opportunity to participate in this launch, because this project is an excellent example of educational diplomacy. It is a way of promoting friendships across our Mediterranean region, and of building holistic wellbeing in the lives of our peoples.

Indeed, your project is even putting into action the United Nations’ Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, you are making tangible efforts to promote SDG Number 4, which focuses on quality education and increasing the number of young people who have access to vital skills and training.

Such initiatives as these, which embrace the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, are even more valuable at these times of uncertainty. I believe that we are strongest when we work together, including the participation of all people, regardless of who they are or where they come from.

We must continue to remind our young people of the importance of our democratic values, and encourage them to be active participants in the future of our Europe, our Mediterranean, and our world.

I am confident that, through this project, you will make new connections and strong friendships, which will result in more prosperous and resilient communities and societies, across our Euro-Mediterranean region.

The Mediterranean is an ancient and beautiful part of the world. Our Mediterranean heritage is a legacy of diversity and dialogue, which should encourage us to build new connections between different peoples and cultures.

We must do all that we can to build a unifying culture of peace in our region, by uniting both shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

We must be guided by our commitment to universal human rights and fundamental human freedoms, which shall lead us to achieve positive peace for the benefit of both present and future generations.

Education is a powerful way to create positive peace.

Education provides us with the tools and the skills which are necessary, to replace divisions with connections, and conflicts with sustainable prosperity.

Education gives us the opportunity to nurture a shared identity of respect and dignity, across the diverse communities and peoples of the Mediterranean and beyond.

Thank you, and I wish you every success in your endeavours.