

## UNICA Rectors Seminar

Rome, 24 March, 2017

### **Welcome address by Prof. Gustavo Piga, Rector's Delegate for International Relations, University of Rome "Tor Vergata"**

On behalf of the President of the University of Rome Tor Vergata, Giuseppe Novelli, I wish to bring to all distinguished participants the warmest welcome, especially to the Rectors and representatives of our fellow UNICA Universities. My thanks go to Luciano Saso for his excellent work as Chairman of UNICA.

It is true that Rome Universities compete among themselves, but they do so in the spirit of the Latin etymology of the word, *cum-petere*, running fast together. I would hope that EU Members states were to do so in their progress toward greater integration.

Many decades ago, in a different world, in a very different Europe, one of our founding fathers, Jean Monnet, claimed that the Europe he wished for would struggle to fight for "*liberté et diversité*".

Today, as the key words seem to be "*austerité et stabilité*", definitely colder and uninspiring, especially for the younger

generations, I have to come to share the worries about our common future that Antonio Martino so aptly reminded us of.

So, this anniversary - 60 years -, comes at the right moment. Anniversaries are moments to look back and to plan for the future, as the commendable structure of today's event confirms. Tor Vergata University is strongly debating, internally and with its various stakeholders, among which UNICA, how to contribute to a new platform of freedom and diversity.

Because nowhere more than in Universities can these two words, these two principles, these two flowers, these two plants, be watered, protected and grown. High schools do not allow easily, it is natural, for different passports to confront daily, the cultures of different nations to exchange and debate.

"Diversity makes you brighter" is one of our *motto*. This is why at Tor Vergata University we are investing so much into internationalization: exchanges, dual degrees, degrees in English: to engage diversity. This is why we believe UNICA is a partnership we must strengthen even further with all our efforts.

I wish to all of us a concrete and fruitful debate!