

**Allocution by Prof. Lilia Infelise**  
**Bujumbura, February 23rd 2015**

**The great challenge of bio economy: designing the foundation of a new civilization.**

The industrialised world is currently facing the most severe crisis of the economical and productive system of the last 500 years: 90% of all the planet's resources, including knowledge, know how and intellectual property, belong to 17% of its inhabitants. As we speak this system is falling apart. The symptom of this crisis have been evident since 1991, but it's only from 2008 on, when it hit the richest industrialised countries, that the whole model of development has started to be questioned. The economic indicators, the climate change, and the exhaustion of the vital natural resources are imposing to re-design the foundation of our civilization and create a new one where the destruction of main natural, human, and cultural heritage of vast areas of the planet would not be inherent to economic growth.

We are all now at the starting line, however there is huge inequality in the distribution of knowledge, know how, and in the abilities for the development and utilisation of individual and collective talents: the human capital.

The deepest form of poverty for a country is the underutilisation of its human capital, which takes the form of unemployment, underemployment, migration and the inherent fragility of the education and training systems.

ARTES Institute is committed to the mobilisation of an international network of researchers and research centres, and entrepreneurs of all backgrounds but equally persuaded that only the diffusion of knowledge and the mutual efforts towards finding solutions will allow the creation of the new civilisation, and avoid the risk of damaging conflicts and natural disasters related to an irresponsible exploitation of the planet's resources.

The core knowledge of the network that we have built through a process of continuous evolution and that we invite you to join, are: materials and construction technologies, energy, water, agro- industry, community regeneration and citizens' awareness rising.

We believe that history is giving to Africa and Europe the task of starting to build, with courage and intelligence, a new civilization the treasures its past, including its dramatic defeats, but also able to create new and inedited perspectives.

With the help of science.

The main directive organs of the European Union drafted the strategy for a task that certainly appears extraordinary, and selected a strategic goal to be achieved by the year 2020: the Old Continent will have to become the world leader for **bio economy**, and this transformation will act as a trigger for the regeneration and development for the economy and the labour, besides the all over improvement of the life quality.

This is the goal that the European leaders set for us to guide the continent during this difficult times: talking about KBBE, Knowledge Based Bio Economy.

**Bio Economy** includes all the industries and the economic compartments that produce, manage and, to some extent exploit biological resources related to activities of consumption and service supply, including agriculture, food production, fishing and all the aquatic resources in general, forests, and so on.

Europe will not be able to achieve this goal, if both the Science and Industry worlds in these two continents will not join their forces to build shared teams and laboratories in such a way that they will become

indispensable to each other, and the solutions for a responsible and sustainable utilization of the resources would also be joint. Still too many think that it's possible to transfer pre-made know how from the more advanced economies, and still too many are ready to build structures and physical infrastructures, but not to share the knowledge and the know how.

On the contrary, our motto is "conversion and creation of knowledge through sharing".

Today we are here with a small delegation of a vast network built not to transfer, rather to build a space for sharing and developing. This space would be well structured and properly equipped with scientific tools. This is why we need plenty of financial resources, and why ARTES has built an early warning system in order to predict and study the changes in the strategies, programs and financial instruments for the realization of our visions and support the efficient utilization of this network of knowledge that we want to build with you.

It's a big challenge and the burden is to be shared among all of us. We want to create a planet that know how to use its resources efficiently, a green one, where there is no longer aid to development but a new generation of policies for innovation and development, where everyone, in every single corner of Earth would be able to feel at home.

This is the vision guiding us, and it's in clear contrast with the theory of the inevitable clash of civilizations. It's a hard work, to be done day by day and step by step: but even the hardest of job is doable if we have a clear goal and a definite method for the best use we can make of all of the energies we need.

We are going to introduce you our organizations and our know how, along with the financial instruments that we have discovered and that we hope to be able to use together.

I wish all of you a good and productive day.