



Values Beyond 2015: The Global Challenge for Universities and their Students.

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Honourable Guests, dear Students, dear Colleagues,

Welcome in Bologna! Welcome to the celebrations of the twenty-seventh anniversary of the Magna Charta signature.

Today the University of Bologna is enjoying the visible privilege of hosting the Magna Charta Observatory, and to collaborate with this important International Institution to address some of the vital and common fundamental questions, which all Universities are asked to address in the many different contexts in which they operate.

I would therefore first of all express my deep gratitude to the Magna Charta Observatory, the Organising committee, the international students, and you all rectors guests and colleagues, coming from many different countries and disciplines for allowing us addressing themes at the hearth of our daily work and of our strategic role in society.

We are leaving a period in which entire generations in many countries are challenged by hard times, in which the sense of a shared responsibility towards this world and humankind is everyday shaken by dramatic epochal events and transformations. For this reason we need values helping us to find a way to engage in new ways in Global Challenges.

In a world which is paradoxically more and more interconnected and more and more divided and unable of understanding and overcoming visible and invisible borders, Universities still represent a place where we can trust on real and deep meetings between people: meetings that are more than ever necessary in this present historical moment in which we see atrophy of ends and hypertrophy of means.

I really wish that through our meeting and exchanges today and our ceremony tomorrow we can develop a new shared understanding of the importance of values. This is vital not only for our sake but is necessary to be able to communicate and affirm the essential role of Universities, of freedom to think and act for society, for our own city and countries and for the global context.

This will be possible thank to the experience of you scientist and experienced rectors and also to the fresh and new outlook of the students. The visible interaction among students, professors, researchers rectors and society embedded in the conference programme may truly reflect the meeting ground which Universities can offer for inter-generational dialogue.

A special thank goes to the Magna Charta Observatory, to his President, Sijbolt Noorda, to the Secretary general, David Lock to the Administrator Carla Pazzaglia and to the whole Magna Charta Council. Their intense work and insight may help us all towards the important endeavour of promoting and defending the common values.