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**European Gender Summit, Quality Research and Innovation through
Equality - Aligning agendas for excellence -
Brussels, 29-30 November 2012**

**Day 2 – Session 6: The role of research evidence in shaping science
making and science policies
Friday, 30 November 2011
European Parliament – Room Jozsef Antall 4Q2, building JAN
09h00 – 09h20**

SPEAKING POINTS

Ladies and gentlemen,

- I am very honoured to address you, at this European Gender Summit conference.
- Excellence, relevance and impact are key words in research and innovation, as stressed by Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn yesterday. We cannot advance on these, without advancing on gender equality, both in research content and how research is performed. This is an issue not only of equal treatment but also of economic growth in order to help us all get out of the crisis, onto a sustainable economic and social path.
- The Commission adopted this summer the Communication "A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth". It is its response to the repeated calls by the European Council to achieve ERA by 2014.

- In a time of scarce public resources, the ERA Communication shows how to do more with less. We need more effective, open and competitive national research systems. This will offer the best conditions to increase research performance and excellence and thus fully capitalise on Europe's scientific and creative potential.
- Promoting gender equality in research means pursuing three objectives in parallel: improving gender balance in decision-making, involving more women as scientists at all levels and integrating the gender dimension in research content.
- Our overall policy focus has shifted as you know from "empowering the women in research" to "fixing the institutions". In other words, what we are aiming for is a change of culture and a modernisation of universities and research institutions when it comes to Human Resources management, funding and decision-making.
- The ERA Communication bets on smarter, sharper, much more focused approach that identifies not only clear actions and targets but also says who should assume ownership of the actions.
- Member States remain the major drivers for change. By making the necessary reforms at national level, they have the power to remove most of the barriers to the achievement of ERA in general and to gender equality as part of ERA. It is essential therefore that Member States commit themselves to implement key actions. To know if there is progress and how much, a robust monitoring mechanism has to be in put in place.
- The ERA Communication will be followed by a Commission Recommendation to Member States, which will propose common guidelines on measures needed in order to achieve gender equality in universities and research institutions.

- But this is not enough. There are issues for which the research stakeholders themselves, such as the research funding councils, universities and other research performing organisations have the power to implement the necessary actions.
- On the day of adoption of the ERA Communication, The Commissioner also signed Memoranda of Understanding with European organisations representing universities, other research performing organisations and funding agencies (EUA, EARTO, LERU and NORDFORSK). With the Memoranda, these organisations commit themselves to pursue a number of specific objectives, one of which is gender equality through institutional changes.
- Science Europe also committed itself to review and revise its 2008 Roadmap, a 'Vision on a Globally Competitive ERA and Roadmap for Actions'.
- The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 includes a provision on the commitment to effectively promote gender equality and the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content. This article 15 is a first in the history of European framework programmes. It aims at reinforcing action on gender equality across the different parts of Horizon 2020. Horizon 2020 will be Europe's biggest ever funding programme for research and innovation, so I hope that its approach to gender will be influential.
- The first ERA-Net on gender will (hopefully) also be launched next year. The objective of this ERA-Net will be to step up the cooperation and coordination of actions and initiatives carried out at national or regional level. These actions should promote both gender equality and the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content. It may also open the way to new strong EU initiatives on gender equality in research and innovation.
- While researchers and innovators may not comprise the biggest sector of employment, they do play a crucial role in boosting overall competitiveness and economic growth.

- By helping women reach their full potential in science, technology and innovation, we include them and their ideas in the front line of our fight for growth, jobs and a better society.
- Given the level of speakers and wide participation, I am confident that this conference will lead to fruitful discussions and concrete ideas on how to move forward on the implementation of measures which will make gender equality a reality.