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The Rector

Prof. Ludovic Thilly
Chair of the Coimbra Group

Egmontstraat, 11, rue d'Egmont
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Bologna, 3 August 2023

Dear Prof. Thilly,

On behalf of the University of Bologna, I am writing to submit our official proposal to host the Coimbra Group General Assembly in 2025 in Bologna, Italy.

As a founding member of the Coimbra Group, the University of Bologna embraces and upholds the fundamental mission and enduring values that define this network. We, as an institution, are committed to actively engage in the collaborative efforts of the CG's working groups in all its areas (Research, Education, Outreach). We do so in order to have a positive impact within both our academic community and the broader global society.

We believe that hosting the Coimbra Group General Assembly in Bologna would hold significant importance.

Bologna takes pride in being the home of the Magna Charta Universitatum, which affirms and spreads fundamental principles such as academic freedom and institutional autonomy. In the present day, we continue to uphold the legacy of the Magna Charta through our active engagement with the Magna Charta Observatory by supporting the realization of its strategic plan.

In addition, the University of Bologna strongly believes in the cooperation between universities, considered as an added value for its own growth, in every field. This is confirmed by its active membership in many international networks and in the European alliance UNA Europa.

Furthermore, the General Assembly would present an opportunity for all of us to reaffirm and celebrate the historical importance of the Bologna Process. As the birthplace of this transformative initiative, which has revolutionized higher education across Europe, it stands as a testament to the power of visionary educational reforms and cross-national collaborations. We cannot forget that the needs at the foundation of the Process originated from the relentless work done by international networks such the Coimbra Group that, with its members as attentive observers and lively promoters, was pushing for new models of European integration.

Embracing the spirit of these milestones, the University of Bologna is committed to host the Coimbra Group General Assembly in 2025 with a conducive and nurturing environment that encourages meaningful discussions and the generation of novel insights. The proposed Coimbra Group General Assembly in 2025 would serve as an excellent platform to strengthen academic collaborations and foster dialogue among member universities to address the pressing challenges of the contemporary academic landscape and society at large. In particular, a focus on the role of academic cooperation and academic networks after 40 years since the foundation of the Coimbra Group, in a world that is quickly changing paradigms, would contribute to guarantee the highest proactive participation of all our members.

The University of Bologna is a prime candidate to host an important international such as the Coimbra Group General Assembly thanks to the characteristics of both our institution and our city.

The University of Bologna is the oldest in the Western world and Alma Mater of all universities; its historical legacy, international outlook, commitment to sustainability, multidisciplinary research approach, facilities, extensive programme offers, and vibrant network of collaborations make us an ideal host for an important international event. Our ability to foster fruitful dialogues, promote academic excellence, and contribute meaningfully to global initiatives ensures that such an event would be both impactful and transformative.

With a vast community of over 90,000 students, the University of Bologna stands as one of Italy's largest universities and among the top 5 Italian universities in major international rankings (QS, Shanghai, Times Higher Education, GreenMetric). Our dedication to international exchange programs is evident, as we rank first in Italy for the number of students participating in study abroad programmes and among the top 5 universities in Europe in terms of exchange student enrolment. Our commitment to sustainability aligns with the UN's 2030 Agenda, as we actively contribute to achieving the 17 sustainable development goals. With five campuses across Italy and a branch in Buenos Aires, we offer a diverse range of over 250 degree programmes tailored to the needs of present-day society, supported by 31 departments and 5 schools. This rich background, combined with our dedication to students, makes the University of Bologna a hub for innovative ideas and intellectual growth.

In addition, the city of Bologna – a world-wide recognised university city - is conveniently located in the heart of Italy and holds a distinct advantage as a host city for the General Assembly, given its exceptional accessibility from various parts of the country, Europe, and beyond thanks to a well-established network of trains and flights. The city's strategic location and excellent transportation links ensure seamless travel for participants, making it an ideal choice for a diverse and international audience.

In terms of logistical support, Bologna's infrastructure is well-equipped for the needs of such a significant event. The city boasts an extensive network of hotels that can comfortably accommodate the large and diverse gathering expected for the assembly. Moreover, the University can provide the right facilities for such event.

Furthermore, attendees would not only engage in meaningful academic discussions but will also have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the city's rich cultural heritage. They would have the possibility to explore Bologna's picturesque streets with 40 km of porticoes proclaimed a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, and iconic landmarks such as the Two Towers and Piazza Maggiore.

In conclusion, Bologna's strategic location, excellent infrastructure, renowned hospitality, and cultural richness make it an exceptionally fitting choice as the host city for the assembly. We are confident that the event would be a resounding success, leaving participants with cherished

memories and a renewed sense of academic and cultural appreciation. This would be possible thanks to the unique features arising from combining the strengths of Bologna as a host city and the University's capacity to facilitate meaningful engagements, we are confident that the assembly would not only be a successful event but also a defining milestone in the journey of academic and cultural advancement for all those involved.

For all these reasons, we believe that holding the General Assembly at the University of Bologna in 2025, coinciding with the Coimbra Group's 40th anniversary, would add depth and significance to the event.

I would like to thank you for considering the University of Bologna as the host for the next Coimbra Group General Assembly. Please find attached a presentation of the University and the city to discover all the advantages of hosting the next General Assembly in Bologna together with a draft budget for the event.

Yours sincerely,



Giovanni Molari