



UNIVERSITÀ DI SIENA 1240
RETTORE

To: Director General Robert-Jan Smits

Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
European Commission

Cc: Jack Metthey, Director RTD/I

Siena, August 23, 2016

Subject: PRIMA - Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area - Ref.
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Dear Director General Robert-Jan Smits,

On behalf of the PRIMA Consortium, I would like to thank you for informing about the positive progress made in recent weeks on the PRIMA file and giving a preview on important issues that will be contained in the proposal of the Commission.

All participants to the Consortium welcome the positive opinion given by the Regulatory Scrutiny Board on the Impact Assessment of the Initiative. It is understood that the Commission is now drafting a Proposal for a Decision of the Council and the Parliament with all the required legal and financial elements for the participation of the Union in PRIMA based on Art. 185 TFEU.

The Consortium is looking forward to receiving this legislative proposal and its subsequent negotiation within the Council and the Parliament in view of kicking-off PRIMA during the upcoming Maltese Presidency of the EU. As you know, a PRIMA General Assembly will take place on September 1st in Barcelona. This is a good opportunity for the Commission to share with the Consortium some elements of your proposal, including the legal and financial parts; it could also be an occasion whereby the Participating States have the opportunity to ask any questions on certain doubts they have at this stage.

As far as financial aspects are concerned, I am pleased to inform you that I received recently a letter from the BMBF committing 20 million euros from Germany to PRIMA, thereby increasing by 10% the total national in-cash contributions to PRIMA (220 million euros).

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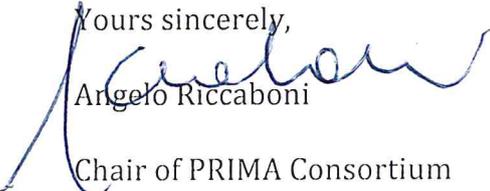
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Allow me to express the hope that the contribution from the Union could follow the same path.

All participating Countries are aware of the relevance of PRIMA in terms of scientific diplomacy. This relevance is based on the respect of the principles of co-ownership, co-decision and co-funding between all Participating States, at the core of the Initiative since its beginning. Such principles and the cohesion existing among participating Countries, no matter if they belong to the EU or not, will allow the implementation of a rigorous Programme able to enhance cooperation and to address major issues of the Mediterranean area in the interest of European and Mediterranean citizens and stakeholders.

We all know that you, as a key actor at the 2012 Barcelona Conference, were among the first to envision the importance of an Art. 185 Initiative to promote cooperation in the Mediterranean area. We are grateful for your truly visionary impulse and the work done by your services. On behalf of the Consortium, let me express our most sincere thanks to Ms. Luisa Prista and her Unit who did a very effective job, looking after the Initiative in a professional, transparent and committed way thus setting the conditions for a positive outcome in all steps of the process. This has been highly appreciated by all Participants to PRIMA and to the 4PRIMA CSA.

Yours sincerely,



Angelo Riccaboni

Chair of PRIMA Consortium

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