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Good morning to everybody.

I thank IATT – with whom UNI has been fruitfully cooperating since 2014 – for this invitation and I do apologize for not being able to attend in person.

I know by experience that it is always necessary to say a few words on what standardization is, who does what and how, its values....

Making standards means studying, drafting, approving and publishing documents of voluntary application, which define “the good way things are made”, by assuring certain performances, safety, respect for environment, products, services, people and organisations.

The purpose of standardization is helping enhance the efficiency and the effectiveness of the social-economic system, by delivering tools supporting the technological innovation, the business competitiveness, the safeguard of consumers and environment, in other words “a well done world”!

This is proved by the declarations of WTO – TBT Technical Barriers to Trade – according to which standardization is a pivotal tool for opening up markets and removing technical barriers to trade.

Standardization can fill up the gap in economic and social contexts, which are not provided with official rules, though sure and shared references, and make the set of regulations clearer, by integrating the relevant applications.

The major values of standardization are:

- Coherence
- Transparency
- Openness
- Consensus
- Voluntary nature
- Independence
- Efficiency

In Italy, UNI is the official National Standards Body, in compliance with the Regulation UE 1025/2012 and the Law Decree 223/2017 (together with CEI, the Italian Electro-technical Committee, covering this field).

UNI is a no profit Association, whose members are enterprises, professionals, associations, public Bodies, Research Centres, academia, representatives of Consumers, Trade Unions and Environmental Associations, the third sector and NGOs. It is a broad platform, where the best resources of our Country may find solutions for everyone's benefit, with the purpose of "doing well", but also of setting a good example, through a bottom-up participation and with a view to a new democratic model.

Considering its features, standardization cannot be "a national business": Italy is actually a Member of CEN (the European Standardization Committee) and of ISO (the International Organization for Standardization).

Standardization is strictly connected with regulation: although technical standards are voluntary, when they are cited in legislative provisions, a synergic process starts up, which can make them somehow compulsory (as it is, for example, for construction products).

This integration with the compulsory regulation is the way to simplification, efficiency and effectiveness, for the benefit of the whole society.

On more occasions, the European Commission and Parliament have declared that standardization helps tackle European social and political challenges, for example, by enhancing quality and safety and by promoting innovation.

I would like to focus on this last topic. Standardization is a simple and convenient transfer of technology: making a product, a service or a process compliant with a standard often represents for enterprises, in particular the small and micro ones, the first step on the way to innovation.

The most innovative sectors are mentioned in our “prassi di riferimento” (UNI/PdR), the most suitable response, aimed at formalising technical specifications in order to set the conditions to develop new standards-making activities. These deliverables are pre-normative documents, able to meet the needs of an innovative market timely, thus opening the way to future standardization works.

They do not represent “the state of the art”, but they actually are one specifically significant “state of the art”, and a tool for transferring knowledge and a relevant know how, thanks also to their free distribution.

We have been cooperating with IATT to develop a series of “prassi”, because this sector is not ready yet to get and make use of proper “technical standards”. Nevertheless, it needs reliable and technologically advanced references.

The deliverables worked out with IATT – concerning low environmental impact underground infrastructure technology of mini-trenching systems (UNI/PdR 7 and 26), or trenchless renovation of rigid underground pipes or electronic marking of underground networks and infrastructures in the subsoil (UNI/PdR 37 and 38) - combine technical and social values, sustainability first, as they cover the laying out, the identification and the restoration of these infrastructures, by reducing the environmental and social impact of these works.

The economical sustainability comes accordingly (considering the kind of works), but it is the fourth (and pretty unknown) aspect of sustainability which is missing: the institutional.

Bearing in mind whom these works are commissioned by, this aspect is not properly covered and, therefore, sustainability is not adequately considered in its comprehensive meaning.

Sustainability is at the basis of the values of our life; the attention we draw on what we use and/or consume, with a view to the effects this may have on our life and on the future generations’ one is getting more and more relevant for the young people (thus proving their strong ethical and social awareness). Standardization is increasingly focused on this, in particular in the framework of the actions supporting the UN 2030 Sustainable Goals, the Number 12 “Responsible Consumption and Production” first.

For this reason, while thinking of the city of Florence, a symbol of our country, of our creativity, of our good taste, of our wellbeing, we cannot take care of environmental aspects only (situ, accessibility, transport, waste and reuse, services, indoor quality, energy).

The sustainability of a city is to be considered and measured, by including the economic aspects - compatibility with people's resources –, the social – people's integration and participation, fight against ghettos and marginalization, training and education, health and safety- and the institutional – equality in the Institutions' actions and care, regardless of the city size.

Thanks to its language, its openness, its “third-party” role, its consensus-building processes, its knowledge, standardization has been always serving people, business and institutions, with the purpose of setting authoritative and “super partes” references, which may help make “consumption and production activities more responsible” and “our cities more sustainable”.

Thank you for your attention. I wish you a very successful meeting.