

# The President of the Republic

## MESSAGE

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The Central European Initiative (CEI) found in the establishment, thirty years ago, of an Executive Secretariat in Trieste, the political fruition of a project capable of contributing to the overcoming of many divisions that had crossed the continent.

Over time, also thanks impetus and vision of Italy, the Initiative has consolidated its role as a stable platform for dialogue, cooperation and the strengthening of mutual trust among its Member States, with a view to facilitate their development and integration within the European family.

The intuitions that inspired its creation remain fully relevant today, in the current geopolitical landscape, characterised by growing tensions and uncertainties.

The CEI stands among the key actors in regional cooperation serving the European project, supporting the European Union accession process of the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine.

No city better than Trieste - a border and a meeting place, a crossroads of languages, cultures and traditions - represents the will to strengthen the link between Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the Balkan region in the shared horizon.

The Executive Secretariat has ensured continuity in the realisation of these ideals/principles/values, strengthening the institutional credibility and operational capacities developed across multiple levels, from governments to parliaments, from civil society to local communities.

The celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of its activities constitutes a proper recognition of the valuable contribution provided to intra-European dialogue and to the promotion of peace.

It is my hope that the Conference on 17 March will represent a further meaningful step along this path.

I am pleased to convey to the Executive Secretariat and all members of the Central European Initiative my appreciation for the work done, alongside with my best wishes on the occasion of this significant anniversary.

Sergio Mattarella