



**European Council of the Liberal Professions**

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Brussels the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2020

Dear President, Dear MEPs,

I am addressing to you these lines as President of the European Council of the Liberal Professions, the body that brings together millions of liberal professionals of the healthcare, justice and law, economy and labour sectors throughout Europe. These past days, my country of origin, Italy, and several other Member States are facing a pandemic – situation often debated in the recent past by the European institutions without any concrete results - caused by the rapid spread of the Covid-19 virus across borders.

We are living in a state of war against an invisible enemy, which expands and reaps lives each day. Far too many lives. On the front line there are many colleagues of mine, many friends of mine, with their white coats and facemasks: physicians, nurses, pharmacists, specialists in laboratory medicine.

They face the virus in an extraordinarily professional manner and with the selflessness derived from moral and ethical values to save as many as possible and to limit the impact of the virus. The emergency offers no respite and there is not much time to discuss and debate, when what is at stake is the lives of the people.

In recent days, many professionals of healthcare have shared with us a profound distress. Many of them message us with the question: And Europe? What is Europe doing to support us? Where is the Community spirit, solidarity, coordination among the countries of the united Europe? How is it possible that the third largest economy in the Union has reached this stage? What are our leaders in Brussels doing to make sure that other Member States won't face a similar fate?

Yes, it is true. Healthcare and health policies are covered by the subsidiarity principle, a matter reserved to the sovereignty of the Member States. But we cannot pretend anymore to be a Union if we are unable to find common answers to common threats of such magnitude.

You, above all the European institutions, represent directly each and every one of the Union's citizens. It is thus to you that I address my colleagues' plea: send us a strong message of

cohesion, as soon as possible. Call for collective measures to support our economies, our small and medium-sized enterprises and professional firms that can no longer bear the burden of this emergency; our healthy and sick citizens and their devoted carers who don't wish their sufferings and efforts to be for nothing. In front of this emergency which seems to have no end, a firm position, a resolution, coming from your side can make the difference.

Please don't let us down.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gaetano Stella". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Gaetano Stella**  
**President of CEPLIS**