

SPEECH BY THE AMBASSADOR
ON THE OCCASION OF
THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY
June 2, 2020

(courtesy translation)

Dear fellow Italians, dear friends,

I am pleased to extend my heartfelt, warm wishes to all of you on this Italian Republic Day.

This year is different. The effects of the pandemic are compounding today old tensions that are finding their way on the streets of many American cities. We will hence not be able to hold a traditional celebration, together with our American friends, in honor of the birth of the Republic and of the strength of the ties that unite our two democracies.

Today, June 2, 2020, we wish to pause and reflect on this delicate moment that Italy, the United States and indeed the whole world are experiencing.

In the words of our beautiful anthem, “Italy called”. And Italians rallied, with pride, unity and sense of purpose. They answered with daily gestures of heroism and spirit of solidarity in the face of adversity and pain.

(courtesy translation)

Countless sacrifices have been made – by health operators, law enforcement officers and essential workers. We have them in our eyes and hearts - and they have the admiration of the world.

The balconies of our houses have become open-air theatres, where daily simple gestures reflected our national sentiment. Many flags have fluttered, embracing us in a spirit of unity. As the Head of State, to whom goes our heartfelt gratitude, put it yesterday during his beautiful speech from the gardens of the Quirinale “during this emergency Italy has shown its best side.”

After weeks of hardship and sacrifice, our Country is starting to look ahead. And it does so with the determination, incredible energy, creativity and commitment that have always distinguished Italy. Its institutions, its businesses, its scientific and cultural communities - its citizens. All of us, adults and young, temporarily deprived of school, a fundamental place of instruction and learning.

(courtesy translation)

Recovery will not be immediate, but Italy – which has risen from adversity many times before and continued on its path of civilization - will emerge from this stronger and more prosperous.

My fellow Italians,

We face a new world, in which unprecedented challenges and opportunities urgently highlight the need for greater, more effective and responsible international cooperation.

We must strengthen those bonds of friendship, which have long been the backbone of our international relations, in accordance with the principles enshrined in our Constitution.

Starting with our Europe, which Italy has given so much to since its very foundation, and which today is called to a great effort of cohesion and revival to win

(courtesy translation)

- in no uncertain terms - the hearts of its citizens. From the Arctic Circle to the shores of our beautiful Mediterranean.

And with the United States, to which we are bound by values, ideals and a long shared history, made possible to such a large extent by the invaluable contribution of the communities of Italian origin, to whom I send my affectionate and grateful greetings.

We must join our efforts and build the bases on which the future of our free and democratic societies will rest upon, combining universal rights, well-being and greater equity.

The United States - from its highest authorities to the many citizens and businesses that mobilized to offer support – has been at Italy's side throughout these difficult times.

US support was timely, like many times before in the history of our Republic. And even while the number of people affected by this dark evil continued to rise

(courtesy translation)

in the United States, America extended a helping hand to Italy. We will not forget.

Today, I am proud to announce that the fundraising campaign promoted by the Embassy and ISSNAF, the association that brings together Italian scientists and scholars in the States, has raised more than half a million dollars. Thanks to your generous contribution, we will transfer these funds to three Italian hospitals on the frontline fighting the Coronavirus.

And I am proud to know that Italians have been close to our US friends too. Italian companies in the U.S. have converted their production to provide essential equipment to healthcare workers and first responders. Many Italians have offered their services to the communities, to support those most in need and hardest hit by the crisis here in the US.

The unity and the shared, unwavering commitment on the two sides of the Atlantic will also distinguish this new phase.

(courtesy translation)

Together, thanks to the close integration of our markets and industries, to the solid presence of US businesses in Italy and Italian ones in the United States, we will harness the opportunities for a recovery driven by new technologies.

Together, we will also pass this test. The beautiful images of the rocket taking two astronauts into space encourage us to look at the new challenges with enthusiasm and optimism. Even in space, Italy and the US are committed to promoting the progress of humanity.

We will overcome this challenge also thanks to the indissoluble ties between our citizens and the many Italian-Americans who contribute to forging a unique, multifaceted bond that is renewed and strengthened daily.

In every field - from science to research, from innovation to technology, from art to culture and on to business - the future's DNA is Italian, and American. And it is excellent.

(courtesy translation)

We look forward to resuming the many planned cultural activities. Beautiful, temporarily postponed exhibitions are being rescheduled in the most important US museums. There is a great desire for Italy, and for our beautiful language.

It is also our sincere hope that we will soon be able to resume travel. Freely. We cannot wait to see our country again and to embrace in warm hug our friends and relatives.

Dear friends,

The pandemic has made it no less urgent and necessary to find solutions to the many global challenges, starting with defending the environment and upholding universal rights through increasingly effective international cooperation.

The US presidency of the G7 and the upcoming Italian presidency of the G20 will play a key role.

On a bilateral level, our two countries continue to collaborate very closely to defend international security. Our Armed Forces – to which we send our

(courtesy translation)

utmost gratitude and admiration - stand shoulder-to-shoulder in the main areas of crisis to confront the threat of terrorism, promote the stability of the Mediterranean and that of the Middle East.

Our commitment as responsible actors of the international community has never failed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Friends,

Today we have here with us the Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia, Ambassador Philip Reeker, who will bring the greetings of the Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo.

Ambassador Reeker, your presence here today testifies to the enduring friendship, which binds our two great Nations together.

Thank you, one and all, for your participation. To you, who every day contribute to the greatness of Italy and the United States - "from sea to shining sea" – go my very best wishes for a happy June 2nd. Auguri!

Ambassador Reeker you have the floor.

(courtesy translation)