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ITALIAN NATIONAL REPORT

Our national Report, of course, focuses only on the spread of COVID-19 in Italy. As you know, we were the first western country to be slammed by the outbreak. In our country, everything started after two chinese tourists were recovered in Rome, at the Spallanzani Hospital, on January 29, 2020.

A few weeks later, on February 18, a male patient was diagnosed with COVID-19 in Codogno (Lodi): he was admitted with an atypical pneumonia and represented the first homegrown case. In the following days there were many more cases, none of whom had contact with the first patient or with anyone known to suffer from this viral disease. It was the beginning of one of the largest and most serious clusters of COVID-19 in the world, with many Intensive Care Units (ICU) filled up with patients. With respect to other countries, our case-fatality rate proved to be very high and, at the beginning, it was dominated by old male patients.

Our front-line doctors and nurses were hailed as heroes, for risking their lives (often being provided with inadequate protective equipment) to treat the patients under extraordinary levels of stress and fear.

Consequently, the Italian government decided to lockdown: despite aggressive containment efforts, the disease continued to spread and the number of affected patients rised deeply, in particular in some northern regions (mainly in Lombardia, but also in Emilia and Piemonte).

As of May 4. 2020:

- overall assessed cases in Italy are > 210.000;
- about 100.000 people have tested positive (81.678 are under home isolation; more than 17.000 are in hospital care with symptoms; about 1.500 still are in intensive care);
- overall, more than 82.000 patients have recovered;
- more than 29.000 died (however, the mortality rate will have to be validated upon certification of cause of death by the Istituto Superiore di Sanità).

Moreover, we would like to highlight some more aspects regarding the so-called COVID-19 "Phase One":

-nearly 160 italian medical doctors died while were carrying out their duties;this enormous impact was caused by the lack of adequate protections and by the absence of testing on healthcare personnel;

- in Italy at the beginning of the pandemic, we had 5300 ICU beds; after a short period, at the moment 9000 ICU beds have become available;
- about 4300 doctors have been recruited, including 1500 trainees and 300 retired professionals;
- national healthcare budget increased by 5 millions euros (it should be compared with respect to other European countries).

After patients' treatments improved as well as national statistics showed that we were on the way to recovery, on April 26, a new Decree was provided, reducing the aggressive measures initially adopted by the Italian Government (the so-called "Phase Two"). In particular, starting from May 4:

- travel within the same region will be allowed, not only for reasons relating to work, health and necessary matters, but also to visit relatives. Travel outside the region will be allowed only for work, health and emergency reasons. People will be allowed to return back home or to the place of residence;
- access to parks, gardens and public villas will be allowed, respecting the interpersonal distance of at least one metre. Children's play areas will remain closed. The Mayors will be able to evaluate the possibility of forbidding access to parks, in case safety regulations cannot be enforced;
- sports activities or exercise activities will be allowed, as long as they are carried out individually.

Minors or dependent citizens shall be accompanied, respecting the interpersonal safety distance of at least two metres for sports activities and at least one metre for any other activity;

- patients with fever above 37.5 degrees, showing respiratory symptoms, there is the strict obligation to stay at home and to inform their doctor. This shall be no longer just a strong recommendation;
- catering activities, in addition to home delivery, will be allowed to reopen to customers, exclusively for the collection of take-away meals, with the prohibition to consume the products inside the premises and the prohibition to remain in the immediate vicinity of the same premises;
- closed-door training sessions for individual athletes practicing sports of national interest will be allowed;
- funerals will be allowed and may be attended by first and second-degree relatives, to a maximum of 15 people;
- manufacturing, construction, real estate brokerage and wholesale trade will be allowed to resume activities. As early as on April 27th it will also be possible to proceed with any preparations in view of the reopening, such as sanitizing work environments and implementing measures for the safety of workers.

Of course, we are still worried about the possibility of a second spread of the infection in the next months.

However, we look forward to fully come back to our lives as soon as possible, following our awful country's experience with COVID-19.