

Brussels, 20 April 2023

Note for the attention of Mr Jean-Marc FILHOL, F4E Acting Director

Subject: Your two messages “Tomorrow will be the 1th of May” sent to F4E staff on 30 March (SIC!) concerning Mario’s memory

Dear Jean-Marc,

First, after your two messages concerning Mario's memory, we hope that you have had the courage...to be ashamed.

Feeling ashamed is not a shame and is above all an act of courage.

"What a shame!" is exactly the sense of the countless shocked reactions we received from colleagues, also outside F4E, concerning your two messages!

I do not need to explain to you how the simple reference to Mario's drama still evokes very deep emotions and therefore how carefully any communication in this respect must be handled.

Indeed, it was with astonishment and amazement, but also with deep bitterness, that staff read your two messages concerning the anniversary of the death of our beloved colleague.

Let us recall the sequence of events in this sad episode.

On March 30, you were first able to send a message titled “*1st May*” to announce that: “*Tomorrow will be the 1th May and I trust that like me, many of you will have some special thought to Mario Gagliardi and his family*”.

Of course, you took the opportunity to illustrate all the initiatives put in place since then to improve the situation at F4E of which you are so proud.

Unbelievable as it may seem...it is just that you sent the message ...a month too early!

And the fact that the day after was the 1st of April made it sadly grotesque.

And here you are with a second message explaining that your first message was sent “*one month too early*” because of your impending departure “*I am losing the time notion*”...even giving us a smile...which I can only hope you have regretted in the meantime... asking us to forgive you of course...

We do not want to believe that you have completely lost your lucidity, at least not on such an important matter, and we would like to propose an alternative and less worrying explanation to such a very sad and memorable communication disaster.

The fact is that Staff's perception is that this mistake is just one element of the excessive zeal communication efforts that F4E's Senior Management is making in order to highlight all the alleged good that has come out of all these allegedly implemented initiatives to supposedly overcome the very serious difficulties that have been affecting the functioning of F4E for too long, and of which Mario and the staff have been victims for too long.

Once again, beyond the slogans, Respect for Staff comes second.

This excessive zeal, all the messages and initiatives aiming of course at trying to convince everyone that the former Director alone was responsible for the problems affecting F4E and that now the page is finally turned and thus no major changes must be implemented by the new Director.

Unfortunately, things are more complicated than that and, we confirm once more, that these profound changes are absolutely necessary and they must concern the management culture at F4E and not just the "agenda".

The results of the Staff Survey, **by far the worst results ever attained within an EU institution or agency**, confirm the extent to which the senior management of F4E does not have the trust of colleagues and how it is also responsible for the current situation.

Unfortunately, one who is responsible for a problem cannot claim to be able to become the solution.

Finally, I would like to appeal to you to avoid sending back any message on 30 April to honour Mario's memory.

Let's avoid further painful steps by considering that your message of 30 March remains valid.

And above all, let's avoid the 1st of May becoming a painful marketing operation aimed at enhancing the so-called changes introduced so far.

I really hope you can share this approach by instructing your so zealous administration to follow it.

After what you have been able to do with your two messages, the best way to respectfully honor Mario's memory, will be to dedicate our thoughts to him in the silence and discretion that is required in such a tragedy. It is out of respect for the memory of Mario and for the pain of his family that I have decided not to forward a copy of this note to F4E staff.



Cristiano SEBASTIANI
Président

Copy:

Mr. Carlos ALEJALDRE, Governing Board Chair

Mr. Marc LACHAISE, Director of Fusion for Energy (F4E)

Ms. Alessia VECCHIO, Head of administration

Mr. Massimo GARRIBBA, Deputy Director General of DG-ENER, IC Chair