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**To whom it may concern**

**Subject: Letter of Recommendation for Prof. Stéphane Pallage on his role as President (Rector) of the University of Luxembourg from Jan. 1, 2018 to Dec. 31, 2022**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Prof. Stéphane Pallage was the President (Rector) of the University of Luxembourg from Jan. 1, 2018 to Dec. 31, 2022. The University of Luxembourg was established in 2003, i.e., it was just a 15-year-old university, a university in the making. Beyond the difficulties of the pandemic, during his term, Stéphane dealt with enormous and critical challenges that a newborn university can face. Stéphane completely redirected its trajectory upward, towards research excellence, teaching excellence, societal impact, administrative and collegial fairness, interdisciplinarity and impact on the local and international industry. Please, let me explain.

With Luxembourg being between France and Germany, the University of Luxembourg started with copying some of the inefficient and outdated traditional institutions of German and French universities. Some of them were a bad imitation of the old German chair system, with lack of tenure track, lack of transparent and democratic processes of decision making within departments and schools. Stéphane simply reformed everything, by bringing and establishing departmentalization, taking away some discretionary powers and giving them to departments and to students.

Stéphane reformed a preexisting dysfunctional promotions system, bringing tenure track and very much needed practices from the North American university system, focusing on research excellence and outreach. Since Stéphane helped us in establishing these new institutions, we have managed to attract young talent, and to improve our gender balance.

Stéphane helped us critically in raising external funds, through establishing connections with the industry in Luxembourg and with other governmental institutions. The government of Luxembourg typically sets new societal goals. During Stéphane's term, the government of Luxembourg set National priorities such as promoting green technologies for implementing Circular Economy practices, Sustainable Finance, innovations for new digital technologies, transportation and logistics, better education and healthcare. Stéphane managed to bring impressive collaborations and funding. For example, the initiative of Sustainable Finance in my department was signed and funded by three Ministries. Stéphane was central in all negotiations and implementations.



Stéphane is graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, an institution promoting interdisciplinarity. Therefore, Stéphane pushed forward excellent interdisciplinary centers (for example, the SnT - Interdisciplinary Centre for Security, Reliability and Trust). In addition, Stéphane established a system for giving research funding to truly innovative and audacious interdisciplinary projects, aiming at fundamental and applied research.

Stéphane has always been committed to issues of diversity and gender equality. Thanks to Stéphane, gender balance in the University of Luxembourg improved remarkably. Young-career females managed to have a mentoring system, in order to experience smoother upward career trajectories within the university. Such administrative innovations mark new directions of social change beyond our university.

Excellent leaders are judged from the way they handle crises. Stéphane handled the pandemic in the best possible way. Stéphane supported teaching, sanitary measures, health issues of students and faculty in a way that the university did not experience any delayed degrees of students, recruitment of PhD students or academic hiring. In addition, Stéphane was critical in involving the University of Luxembourg in Covid research, facilitating the writing of grant proposals and disseminating new knowledge on all aspects of the pandemic crisis.

On top of these innovations, Stéphane pushed forward the planning on building of new campuses, the medical school, and numerous new institutions. Such steps involve enormous administrative effort. In brief, Stéphane did a remarkable job in establishing higher education in Luxembourg and promoting societal roles for the University.

Due to personal reasons (Stéphane's family is based in Montreal and the pandemic made him miss his family), Stéphane decided to return to Montreal. The University of Luxembourg has lost its best President, its major chance to break through its continental-Europe profile, in order to gain a more North-American, more international profile.

Without any hesitation I fully recommend Stéphane for the role of President in any institution. A President who could deal with the administrative, political and even financial challenges of the University of Luxembourg is ready to deal with any adversities in virtually any university in the world.

Please, do not hesitate to contact me directly should you require any further information.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christos Koulovatianos', written in a cursive style.

Christos Koulovatianos