

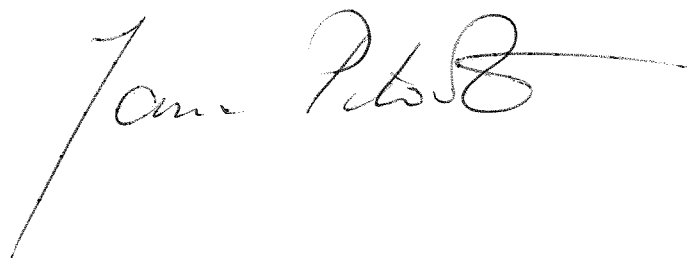
**ENCOURAGEMENT LETTER BY COMMISSIONER POTOČNIK
TO EPBA – THE AUTHORITATIVE VOICE OF THE PORTABLE BATTERY INDUSTRY**

We live in a world where the pressures on resource use and on our environment are growing far too fast. In the 20th Century the world population grew 4 times, and economic output 40 times. We increased our fossil fuel use by 16 times, our fishing catches by 35, and our water use by 9. This is often called the great acceleration – yet as we continue to accelerate into the 21st Century we can't ignore the fact that with an anticipated world population of 9 billion by 2050, we risk losing our ability to sustain ourselves with what this planet and its finite resources have to offer.

This is why resource efficiency is a key part of the Europe 2020 strategy: our strategy for structural transformation of the European economy. Resources are limited, Europe is highly import dependent, the price of energy and other important raw materials are growing and increasingly volatile, and it is clear that the most resource efficient economies are also the most competitive. The efficient use of resources – and here I also include natural resources like biodiversity and electronic waste, as just two examples – is therefore not only the question of environmental sustainability, but, together with building knowledge and the innovation society, it is also the central question of the future competitiveness of our European economy. This is something that business is increasingly – and correctly – buying into.

In Europe we are trying to align all resources-related policies to help transform the European economy and contribute to global development in a sustainable growth model that can ensure quality of life within our planet's ecological limits.

I am glad to see from EPBA's sustainability report that this is something you understand all too well. I commend the work you have put into the report and your foresight. It shows to me that resource efficiency is already a driving force for business. It is not an academic concept, it is a practise that needs further expansion. For the benefit of business, of society and of our planet.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jan Potočník". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.