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Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi vows sweeping reforms as Italy prepares to relaunch its economy.

Edoardo Bonatti
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Prime Minister **Mario Draghi** unveiled his government's objectives and priorities in his maiden speech to the Italian Parliament. The former president of the European Central Bank was appointed as Prime Minister almost two weeks ago, and today he finally unveiled the core of his future policies after listening to the proposals coming from political parties and civil society. While everyone knew what issues he had to address in his speech, there was great anticipation for how he would do so.

In a long and impassioned speech, Draghi enumerated the many challenges laid before him. Of course, an efficient pandemic response was one of the main topics, as Italy continues to struggle to combine the protection of its citizens' health with a robust economic recovery. To address the latter, Draghi vowed to undertake sweeping reforms to finally comply with the many requests coming from the European Union over the years.

Draghi called for unity among politicians and citizens reminding his coalition, one of the broadest majorities ever seen in Italian history, that "*Today, unity is not an option, unity is a duty. But it is a duty guided by what I am sure unites us all: love for Italy.*" This appeal went hand in hand with a strong emphasis on Italy's continued allegiance to the European Union and the euro, the latter being defined as "irreversible".

On the economic front, Draghi stressed the significance of the transformative value of the pandemic. Italy's economy will have to undergo a profound makeover relying on technological innovation research and reforms. Both businesses and workers should be protected and aided by the government to be more competitive and equal. Creating a favourable business environment where foreign investors, as well as domestic ones, will be able to create profit and jobs is going to be one of the government's most prominent endeavours.

European funds earmarked to Italy by the Union's "Next Generation EU" initiative will be carefully distributed and used according to the plurennial strategic plan under the guidance of the Ministry of Economy. The very same EU programme calls for decisive reforms and Draghi pledged to see the process through. The government will develop a comprehensive reform of the tax system to streamline and improve it. Draghi extolled the benefits of effective tax reform, calling it a "*cornerstone of budgetary policy*". The government is also looking to overhaul the judicial system and the public administration following European guidelines to make them more efficient and consistent.

Such promises carry more weight than usual. Draghi is leading a government of national unity and, hopefully, bickering will be reduced to a minimum. He is also among Europe's most respected personalities, thanks to his eight-year tenure as ECB president. He has widely considered the saviour of the euro following its "*whatever it takes*" speech back in 2012, and over the years he showed not only a great deal of proficiency in bargaining with Europe's biggest political players but also a long-term vision for Italy and its role in the Continent's future. Expectations are high, and it seems that international markets are especially bullish on the future of Draghi and Italy. A long season of reforms and growth is long overdue. There is no better man to trust with it. There is no better time to invest in the success of it.