

## EEMA Conference 2010: Welcome by Organizing Committee Chairman

Buenas tardes, amigos

Bon jour mes amies, soyez les bienvenue

Buena sera amici

Guten Abend, liebe Freunde, herzlich willkommen

Welcome to all of you to this year's EEMA Conference in Switzerland

Can you remember the countdown for Christmas, or rather for Father Christmas when you were a child? You counted: 4 nights to sleep 3, 2, 1 and then the great day, the great moment with all its surprises and presents was there!

For me this event is a sort of Christmas-surprise – and you, you are the presents!

So much preparation work of our Organizing Committee and of the Program Committee with Danielle and Erwin had to be done over the last 3 years.

I almost thought it would never end. But now I am looking into so many faces of friends – almost 300 the highest figure of attendance ever reached in the 58 years' old history of EEMA. Thank you for having followed our invitation and for your travelling to Switzerland – some of you over really far distance.

The motto of this conference is “Youth Exchange – With Heart and Responsibility”. What do these two keywords mean?

- ☐ There is a medical interpretation: Our heart is the center of the body system and through its constant beating is keeping us alive.
- ☐ Geographically looked at: Switzerland where we now meet is in the heart of Europe – although not a member of the European Union, but bound to that Union with a huge package of contracts.
- ☐ The word “heart” has also many mental significances: The bleeding heart, the cheerful heart etc.

There are many more meanings of the term “heart”: However what does it stand for in our program of Youth Exchange? It stands a bit for all mentioned before. It means that we should put heart and soul into our work. That we show dedication and render service to our youth in the true spirit of Rotary!

The second keyword: “Responsibility”, does make us aware that we want to offer reliance to all our program participants, parents and partners. It requires a correct administration, keeping to rules and certification basics.

In fact: It is our responsibility to prepare our youth for the future, for educational development and generally speaking contribute to better understanding among people and world peace.

Each of you is constantly gaining personal experience and has perhaps a different awareness. Let us take the great opportunity of this EEMA conference to exchange such experience and opinion. You will have the chance to do so in the workshops and by networking. Furthermore I am convinced our guest speaker Prof. Perrig will contribute to such knowledge.

Let us set as the goal of this conference to gain inspiration and awareness of our unique program of Rotary Youth Exchange. Let us take this conference to heart!

Again: I welcome you all with open heart and open arms!

Thank you.