

Address by UNIMA President, at the UNIMA council meeting Bochum Germany 2018

Dear UNIMA executive and council members, fellow puppeteers, friends, hosts and others present with us today - a heartfelt welcome to all of you, as we open the UNIMA council meeting in Bochum Germany.

It is a great honour and pleasure for UNIMA, to be meeting in Bochum and in Germany. This is the first such large and important meeting for UNIMA international in unified Germany, and on behalf of our organisation,

I thank you all for attending the same, most importantly our hosts for this event.

On Behalf of UNIMA International I'd like to thank
His Excellency the Mayor of Bochum Mr. Thomas Eiskirch

The minister of culture, of land Northrhine-Westfalia
Ms Isabell Pfeiffer-Poensgen

The bank "Sparkasse Bochum" one of the main sponsors of this meeting.

The director of our council meeting venue, Ruhr Congress,
Mr. Kuchajda who has gone out of his way to make this possible,

And last but not least Fidena with Annette Dabs and all her colleagues, volunteers and co-workers who came forward with the idea of holding this council meeting in Bochum.

I am happy to also say that there have been many new and efficient proposals worked out and implemented by our secretary general. These have made our organization more streamlined and focused by way of uniform codes for emails, logos, and other materials on the main UNIMA site including working projects and commissions.

We all need to congratulate our Secretary General Idoya Otegui, who with our treasure Lucile Bodson has put in tremendous efforts for the betterment and exposure of our organization, especially with the local authorities, sponsors of the region in France and UNESCO. This I am sure will continue to grow, and bear fruit in the coming years.

We had a taste of some of these during the many UNIMA events, presentations and individual meetings last year in Charleville. The launch of WEPA the world Encyclopaedia of Puppetry Arts on the net in three languages, including our collaborations with the institute, school and festival; specially now for the 2nd consecutive year 2018 UNIMA has celebrated 21st March World Puppet Day in the city, with great success and enthusiasm.

You will hear an extensive report and suggestions from our Secretary General on the same.

Our world today is treading many new and exciting paths, as numerous doors open, so do many close, due to reactionary elements, and though we follow in UNIMA by the first para in our constitution pertaining to the UN declaration of human rights, the world we live in, as also some of our national centres cannot or may not see this as a single paradigm.

Personal and political implications I have noticed have come in the way of some of our working projects, it is one thing to have personal obligations and ideals, but at the same time

as a member of an International and world organisation such as ours we need to overcome these.

We must work towards a more inclusive and progressive union of puppeteers, artists and human beings we must think of the status of the organisation UNIMA affiliated to UNESCO, I remind you that we will celebrate our 90th anniversary in 2019. Making us one of the oldest international theatre organisations of its kind in the world.

We will have to work within certain practical conditions of budgetary restraints, this is a reality if UNIMA has to be productive in the future, we have to have projects which possibly dovetail with our collaborators and sponsors, we need to try and raise some funds for our own individual commission activity's, not only rely on the major corpus account of UNIMA, and this responsibility lies with all of us, unfortunately easier said than done.

I would dream of a day when each of us puppeteers can donate a very small percentage of our yearly performance income to UNIMA making it a truly dynamic organisation.

My dear friends and colleagues in UNIMA, I would like to thank on behalf of all of us Mr Fabrice Guilliot who retired from his post at the secretariat in Charleville Mézières last November. For all that he has done for our organization, we will forever be in his debt, and I am sure he will always support UNIMA in some way or the other.

At the same time, I would like a moment, to introduce you all to Ms Emmanuelle Castang who will take over this position. We all welcome you Emmanuelle, and look forward to a long and positive relationship with UNIMA together.

I wish all who are present a fruitful, thoughtful and peaceful council meeting in the next few days in Bochum

I end as I usually do with a quote, one which I have used before by one of our UNIMA members of honour Mrs Kamladevi Chattopadhyaya 1903-1988, pioneer in the conservation and support of folk arts and crafts specially puppetry in India.

*The art of living, like all arts, is moving, flowing, changing...
It is like life itself, **inclusive**, not exclusive:
It touches us to identify our interests **with one another**.*

*For this we need a meeting of minds a **rational approach**, not emotion and sentiment alone.
In other words **tolerance** and a **respect** for those whose ways are **different from ours**.*

When reason is abandoned, violence results.

We then resort to coercion instead of persuasion.

*If we wish to revive and relive the **genuine art of living**,*

*We must adopt, once again; **the laws of reason-relive our old faith in humanity**.*

Dadi D.Pudumjee
President UNIMA International