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Celje, 080913

Welcome address by the president

Dear Excellencies, Generals, Officers, Soldiers, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends, friends of AMI!

Being here in front of you and opening our, this year's, AMI-conference in CELJE is a great honour and challenge for me. It is now second time that I preside over our conference and it is a great responsibility for me and for Austria to take over. Thank you all for trusting me and my team coming from Austria and the Netherlands.

Looking back I want to express my thanks and my gratitude to Belgium and the Belgian Armed Forces, their military bishop His Eminence Andre LEONHARD, Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussels, and the responsible team for organizing our conference of 2012 in RETIE/ELGIUM in this excellent manner.

It was in fact a small organizing team, but they all did an excellent work and we got important looks inside Belgium and Flanders, but also accomplished quite a lot of important work there.

Today I am taking pride in welcoming twelve nations coming from four continents and taking part in this year's conference, thereby contributing to our common goals.

I warmly welcome all of you.

What we expect is a period of intense working. Beside this we will have the opportunity to see a little bit of our beautiful host country Slovenia with its rich history that for many centuries was closely connected with Austria – as all European countries were in different times and relationships.

I am sure that we will learn also about the culture and hear about current problems Europe as a whole is facing at the moment.

At this point in time I would like to thank Slovenia, its Armed Forces and its military Ordinariate for being attracted by the idea of hosting our conference and for all the organisational support they rendered to us.

Thank you all very much!

Let me conclude: more information and the ideas of this year's conference I will pass to you tomorrow morning when officially opening the conference.

For now I wish us and the conference most of success and rewarding days, which should be created by the delegations and the delegates themselves, rather than by the presidency alone.

Thank you for coming and may God be with us!