



APOSTOLAT MILITAIRE INTERNATIONAL
the PRESIDENT

STRENGTHENING CHRISTIAN VALUES WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES WORLDWIDE

MajGen ret. Norbert SINN

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AMI Conference in Rome, Italy 17-22 September 2017

Your Excellencies, Generals and Admirals, commissioned officers and non-commissioned officers, dear friends,

What a pleasure to meet you all again! Last year rather the same time we started our conference in the Netherlands, which was a wonderful one. At that time we knew already that this year we would be in Rome. And here we are!

Thank you, Excellency, dear Military Bishop Marciandò. Already last year I saw it as a special honor for us that you assisted our conference and gave us an important lecture concerning the fate of refugees crossing the Mediterranean. We all know that in fact the situation has not ameliorated but worsened. Hosting us and giving us the opportunity to organize our conference together with Your Military Ordinariate in the Eternal City, the most important place for Catholics after Jerusalem, I understand as a special symbol of friendship and acceptance. We all hope that our conference could pave the way to a stronger relationship with you and the Armed Forces of Italy.

I now would like to underline the beauty, historical, cultural, spiritual and political importance of Italy and Rome but I feel it is not necessary, because all persons gathered here are aware of and admiring it.

I am happy to announce already the Austrian Military Bishop Monsignor Dr. Werner Freistetter, who will stay with us all the week, and I say a special warm welcome to Vice Admiral Matthieu Borsboom, our president elect, and of course to you all, distinguished delegates from 15 countries, especially and finally you, members of the Italian delegation, 16 delegations in total.

Comrades and friends,

Ladies and gentlemen!

Allow me to introduce myself, as some delegates are part of our AMI-family for the first time. My name is MajGen Norbert Sinn, until November 2013 Commandant of the Austrian Military Academy „Maria Theresa“ and now retired. Five years ago Austria was elected for AMI Presidency and since then we have the honor to serve as Presidency.

Following the all-over agenda of the last years, “The Christian Soldier in the Service of Just Peace. – To live authentically according to the Word of God and to spread the Gospel“, we decided, following the challenging developments worldwide, especially in the Middle East, the Eastern parts of Europe, and I just want to point out again the stress and the cruelty of the IS and the African tragedies, triggering a new Völkerwanderung (migration of peoples) to the North, as we all can observe directly, touching even the midst of Europe and the European Union, but also the developments in the Far East and Latin America to deal during this year’s conference with the question of: **“Searching for Roots”**

I also would like to express my gratitude to all lecturers cooperating and addressing us. We are happy having you with us.

I am convinced that at the end of the conference we will have elaborated forward-looking results.

And now I warmly welcome all 15 delegations present:

AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, CROATIA, GERMANY, GHANA, KENYA, LITHOUANIA, the NETHERLANDS, NIGERIA, the PHILIPPINES, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, the UNITED KINGDOM, the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and our marvelous host ITALY, taking the responsibility for organizing a huge part of our conference.

At the end I like to introduce to you the AMI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

To my left:

- Colonel Friedrich AFLENZER, Vice President from Austria
- WO II Markus STROMBERGER, Second Vice President from Austria,

To my right:

- Mrs. Nelleke SWINKELS-VAN DE VORST, Secretary General from the Netherlands,
- Colonel Jan van LIEVERLOO, Vice-Secretary General from the Netherlands,
- WO II Herman VRIESEMA, Treasurer, from the Netherlands,
- Ecclesiastical Assistant Father Patrick DOLAN.

Last but certainly not least, my wife IDA who is accompanying me (we have been married since 1973).

And so I formally declare this year’s Apostolat Militaire International Conference open.

May our Lord bless us and give us good will and strength.

Thank you for your attention.