



FROM THE DESK OF THE DISTRICT GOVERNOR 16/2011-12

District Governor Hj. Zainie is now addressing distinguished guests and fellow Rotarians in a dinner banquet in Singapore in conjunction with the World Understanding and Peace Day celebrating today the 23rd February the 107th birthday of Rotary International.



ORGANIZING CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT TAPAN RAO AND FIRST LADY PRABA, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND MY FELLOW ROTARIANS.

Today around the world Rotarians and friends of Rotary are celebrating 23rd February, the birthday of Rotary, the 107th anniversary of the first club meeting of Rotary, the Rotary club of Chicago.

On this day in 1905 Paul Harris and his 3 other friends Gustavus Loehr, Hiram Shorey and Silvester Sohiele met, on a cold evening at Room 711, Unity Building, North Dearborne Street, Downtown Chicago, to talk about their personal and professional experiences. Paul Harris then unfolded his general plan for a club. Out of this simple beginning sprang the first world's international service organization called Rotary International and after years of most exciting and tortuous times it now has 1.2 million members in more than 33,000.00 clubs in about 200 countries and geographical areas.

This birthday of Rotary is called by different names. In some countries the week of 23rd February is celebrated as a "week of Rotary movement". In our District here in Singapore, like in many other Rotary Districts, it is celebrated as a World Understanding and Peace Day. In other parts of our own District, it is celebrated as an International Night.

But whatever name it is being celebrated, this day marks another historical milestone in the history of this great organization of ours.

Over the 107 years Rotary has not only seen the materialistic and economic achievements of the



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world but also its nightmares of social and humanity regress. But Rotary not only survives, it also thrives because we are multi-national, we come from different vocations and are the best in our professions, we are from different races and we are from different religions. We are unity in diversity, because in our hearts there is but one common purpose and objective and that is "Service Above Self".

Our mission is to help, develop and to dignify the human race and we do this not by commanding, demanding and punishing but by sheer act of motivating and persuasion. We do it with a smile and open arms and whatever we touch, we add values. We have the infrastructure to reach the grassroots level, because we are the grassroots. We are able to survive and established ourselves and grow in these times of development and conflict because our founders and those great Rotarians before us have great vision and excellent leadership to enable us to serve mankind well.

The programs that we carry on together over these years all over the world is a clear demonstration of the power of Rotary International and the devotion and the generosity of Rotarians of wanting to do more. A famous Doctor once said: "the greater reward for doing is the opportunity to do more".

At this juncture, I wish to thank all those Rotarians, those unsung and unseen heroes at club and District levels who have done so much of service to mankind. And, for those Rotarians and friends of Rotary for their support to Rotary Foundation in the forms of Paul Harris Fellow, Major Donor, members of the Arch. D Klumph Society and other givings to enable Rotary International to finance its many community projects worldwide.

I am proud to announce here tonight that a fellow Rotarian from our District will soon be honored to the next level (Level 5) in Arch C Klumph Society Status- the Chair's circle level for donation reaching to USD\$500,000. And, this generous Rotarian is no other than Past President Dato Dr. Tan Huan-Tsin and his spouse Dr. Tan Tsao Sui-Lan, both of whom are here tonight with us.

Dato Dr. Tan and Dr. Tan, kindly be upstanding, please to be recognized.

Distinguished guests, my Fellow Rotarians.

In these 107 years of our existence "serving mankind has been and will continue to be our business". Rotary remains dedicated to improving communities, relations between peoples, and world peace and understanding. Today, Rotary is one of the most prestigious, non-governmental organizations in the world.

Everyday we receive appeals, calls and requests from different segments of our society all over the world for help to serve their purposes. We are able to answer these calls for help because we are the only non-governmental organization(through the network of our 33,000 Rotary clubs) capable of meeting more than 33,000 different communities worldwide everyday towards



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improving the lives of these communities, the lives of the people and towards better understanding and world peace.

In 1985, Rotary International together with its partners the World Health Organization, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the UNICEF launched PolioPlus, an ambitious program to immunize the world against the deadly disease polio.

As a result of this partnership's efforts, polio cases have dropped by 99% since 1988 and the world stands on the threshold of eradicating the disease. We heard recently of the good news from India...no new cases in the last 12 months. We are told of how successful we are in meeting the USD 200.0 million challenge by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation well before the deadline of July this year. So happy is the Gates Foundation with Rotary International that another USD 50.0 million was made available for polio eradication but this time not as a challenge.

My fellow Rotarians, with all these recent achievements and those achievements of the past, we have earned ourselves such reputation seen by many Governments, business entities and non-governmental organizations as desirable partners to do more good things in the world. We have since 1996 been a partner of UNESCO where Rotary is only one of three organizations in the world that has been accorded the status to perform on operational basis with UNESCO worldwide.

We need to capitalize on this reputation. Build on it to become stronger and stay relevant for years to come. And, if we do that, instead of describing Rotary as "an organization of 1.2 million Rotarians in 33,000 clubs"... we should be saying, in the near distance future, that Rotary is an organization of more than 1.5 million Rotarians in over 55,000 clubs... Why not my, Fellow Rotarians? We should all work on achieving this! And I believe we can!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ROTARY INTERNATIONAL.

Thank you.

Hj. Zainie Abdul Aucasa