

## **PRESIDENT BEDRI BAYKAM'S SPEECH AT THE REGIONAL MEETING LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN COSTA RICA ON NOVEMBER 19, 2015**

First I would like to say hello and send my best wishes to all of you from all the Latin American countries and the Caribbean. It's wonderful to speak today to all of you and Latin America which is the great land of humanity with its nice sincere vibrant people everywhere and with so many historical figures that have shaped the world; from Jose Marti to Bolivar, from Camilo to Che, from Castro to Hugo Chavez it's a great meeting point for the social and political turmoil of the world that has shaped our consciousness.

Also the arts of Latin America is so rich so colorful so fulfilling with names such as Diego Rivera, Orozco, Rufino Tamayo, Frida Kahlo, Matta, Antonio Berni, Wifredo Lam, Botero, Roberto Aizenberg, Francisco Amighetti. The world shares your great art with much interest.

The world is a difficult place to live. After we have seen the terrible tragedy in Paris, we all felt terrible. I decided to go there next month with our vice-president Anne Pourny to see our Parisian colleagues in their. We have seen several things happening in Mali just yesterday, in Paris, in Kenya, in Syria, in Turkey; unfortunately ethnic and religious wars, economic interest wars have spread all over the world where as we as the artists we want to make the world a better and more peaceful place. We can only achieve this with our solidarity. Let's do our best to stay in touch with each other to preserve our freedom and democratic environment.

During the presidency of our dear friend Rosa Maria Burillo Velasco, we also have had problems around the world. For example, the destruction of the Monument of Humanity by Turkish sculptor Mehmet Aksoy.

Unfortunately during that press conference about the Monument I had been severely stabbed and I miraculously survived this attack. The art world also is very much under the threats attacking democracy and freedom and secularism.

We must achieve a more balanced art world and not take in consideration only the western rich nations standards. In 1984 I had attacked the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art with a manifesto accusing them of building art history as only the history of Western nations five rich countries like France, England, Germany, Italy, United State. I did the same thing in Paris, at the Center Pompidou in 1989 about the rights all non-western artists and all the prejudices directed against them. In 1994 my book "Monkeys Right to Paint" was published including all these issues. We must fight against the cultural imperialism of the western culture, which sometimes unfortunately is filled with prejudices. We must ask our museum, curators, collectors and gallery directors to stop looking for new high art in Paris, London, New York, and Basel. We must believe first in ourselves, if we want the world to believe in us. We are here to make sure of the real internationalization of the art world.

If you don't believe in yourself nobody else will.

We must stay up-to-date with our communication lines mostly our international and national websites and we must do everything to stay in touch with each other

As you know in 2011 at the General Assembly in Guadalajara Mexico, as Turkey we had given a proposal for having Leonardo da Vinci's birthday 15<sup>th</sup> of April as World Art Day has been accepted in the name unanimously. Since then, on that day, April 15, we are celebrating that day that week as World Art Day all over the world. You can see the traces in Google, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. This year again soon I will send you the president's letter telling you only about World Art Day and explaining you how you might increase your activities using the municipalities using the communication lines. Between us also we had asked that the general assembly press release and the President's letters that you receive be translated in Spanish and distributed among the national committees, which again will be distributed to every artist member because we want to establish serious continues links among us.

Celebrations sometimes last up to a week or like in Mexico up to a month! It's very important that in spring the whole world breathes art in the same time simultaneously with the festivals and the panel

discussions and all sorts of festivities.

We must keep the information flow alive and we must stay as I keep saying aware of each other. We might share all the creative information for all the problems that we have among us and we have a lot to achieve together. Your problem is our problem every new step new idea, we will spread it to the rest of the world and every problem we will do our best to solve it together. We will share every creative idea every issue in a parallel world that will enriched each other.

The use of social media is very important and we will do our best to develop social media may be Facebook or Twitter or Instagram alongside our websites.

Also our dear friend Marta Mabel, has send me your agenda in this the Regional Meeting which is in front of me. I would like to congratulate you already for the nice work you are doing for the region and I wish all the best to your the Regional Meeting. Send you all our regards from Istanbul, from myself, my executive secretary Oyku Eras and all the members of our national and international executive committees.

All the best to you,

Bedri Baykam

World President

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