

## **MJG'S OPENING SPEECH - WORLD CONGRESS IN ROME**

**MONDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 12PM (TIME TBA)**

**VENUE: EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF ROME**

- Set out listed dignitaries including:
  - Professor Agostino Gambino, Honorary President of the Italian Chapter of AIDA;
  - Professor Paolo Montelenti, President of the AIDA Italian Chapter and Chairman of the Organising Committee of Rome 2014;
  - Vicki Roberts, President of the Federation of Defence and Corporate Counsel;other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.
- Four and a half years have gone by since the last meeting of AIDA at a World Congress in Paris in May of 2010. Some days I think the time has gone very quickly, other days I think it drags.
- Certainly when I commenced my Presidency in Paris, the next World Congress in Rome seemed a long way off. I hope that for you who have experienced my Presidency, that time has not taken too long.
- It is my great pleasure as AIDA President, to bid you a welcome to the 14th World Congress of AIDA in the eternal city in the nation of Italy whose insurance law experts have over the years contributed so much to the success, vitality and health of AIDA.
- One of the roles that I had as President was to take information and knowledge of AIDA to many different countries, to speak to existing chapters and to encourage the formation of new chapters where they did not exist. To educate myself for that mission, I read as much as I could about the AIDA history. There are many good sources.
- So it is appropriate today that we meet in Rome which hosted the first World Congress of AIDA a little more than 50 years ago. ... and in doing so the memory of the late Professor Donati will not be far from us. He of course was the first President of AIDA and he gave the opening address at the first World Congress.
- I do not propose to reflect on the history of AIDA as I know that much better words than I could fashion, have been put together by Professor Gambino whose long and meritorious service within AIDA commenced well before mine.
- So in the time allocated to me may I speak a little of the present and a little of the future. In my life as an insurance lawyer I have been honoured to occupy a number of offices for the insurance industry, government and the legal profession. Many of them were voluntary or honorary. I have always felt that the great reward that comes from the privilege of occupying such offices is the genuine enjoyment you get from it, based on what you with others are able to achieve, the great friendships you form and the generosity of the spirit which you experience.

- AIDA is another such organisation. That generosity of spirit manifests itself in so many of our people in the different parts of our organisation. I can't name them all but may I say to all thank you so much for your generosity of spirit in contributing to what AIDA is.
- That generosity of spirit, collegiality, genuine friendship manifests itself no greater than within the executive and the secretariat.
- Personally I think my greatest contribution to AIDA has been the formation of a hardworking and very successful executive. It is a genuine team in every sense and I thank the members of the executive for what they have done.
- I'm sure the executive will join me in saying to Colin and to Tim and to Sandra who constitute our secretariat, as well as to our long serving Treasurer, Otto Klob, that AIDA would not exist without you. Especially to Colin and Tim who receive a very small recompense for the enormous hours they put in and the expenses they personally carry in performing their roles, I can't begin to express my gratitude to you ... I and the Office of the Presidency is greatly dependant on you.
- It has often been said the Working Parties are the lifeblood of AIDA. If that be so, you are its lungs and probably also its heart. It can only be your love for this organisation which keeps it going. We know that you cannot go on forever and one of our challenges is to find a seamless succession plan for you
- My formal report just delivered to the General Assembly of AIDA referred, in a general way, to much of what has been achieved in the past four years. Going forward, AIDA exists in a world environment which in 2014 is characterised by the following:
  - a multifaceted globalisation of so many different things of relevance that go well beyond the challenges for harmonisation which our forebears identified in 1960;
  - an increasingly globalising industry facing multi location challenges, uncontrollable multinational events which are as broad as significant climate change events on the one hand and the global financial crises on the other;
  - legal regimes which always seem to be playing catch-up in their efforts to regulate on a basis which is regional if not global - national boundaries are becoming less and less important;
  - a world where the influence of major multinational corporations is far greater than that of 90% of the nation states.
  - An insurance industry which has been increasingly challenged to see itself not just as a vehicle for selling products and making profits for shareholders but equally, from its monopoly position, showing the resources that a good corporate citizen can bring in the solution of world problems experienced by both the richest and the poorest. Microinsurance is an excellent example of this.
  - Specifically for AIDA finding cost effective ways, attractive ways, compelling ways to engage all in our work especially those from poor countries who could benefit most by what we do you yet are often least able to access us;

- reflecting on the broad role that we have as insurance law practitioners in not just producing technically excellent scientific outcomes but at the same time ensuring their relevance for the world as a whole.
- It is not as though the work of AIDA has contracted over the past 50 years. Indeed, the challenges are in every sense greater.
- In concluding these remarks can I express my warmest thanks to the Italian chapter and the Italian organising committee for taking on the role of organising Rome 2014 and for doing such a splendid job of work.
- Can I thank you the delegates for coming to Rome from so many parts of the world. It's not easy to give up that time or afford the cost but you do so because, like me, you see the enormous value in the contribution you are making.
- And finally to the general reporters, to those who answered questionnaires, to those who populated the panels or set up the programmes for the Working Parties or led their discussion or participated in the regional meetings - it is you who make this programme what it is. It is you who have brought us all together to help make this a great occasion, an occasion that truly befits the memorialising of that first AIDA World Congress in Rome between the fourth and the seventh of April 1962. Thank you.