



Valletta, 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2025

Me: [A warmly welcome for the audience]

Me: [I introduce myself]

On behalf of the Rotary and Rotaract clubs in Malta I express appreciation for the attendance to this 6th UNESCO Cities for Peace Conference

I acknowledge special guests, His Excellency Monsignor Joseph Vella Gauci, Malta's Ambassador to UNESCO and the Mayor of Valletta, Mr Olaf Mackay.

I have to mark the extra ordinary circumstance of this conference, which we all would liked to have seen taken place in the Ukrainian World Heritage City Lyiv. I will not go into details about the horrible war in Ukraine.

But for our fellow Rotarians in Lyiv and in the rest of Ukraine I would like to express my sincere hope that, in the near future, they will be able to organise the conference in Lyiv, the beautiful city in unoccupied Ukraine. Slava Ukraini.

I mention the purpose of the event:

UNESCO HISTORIC CITIES, "Sustainability and Historic Cities: Challenges and Opportunities."

This conference is the 6<sup>th</sup> conference. These conferences are an initiative of RC Urbino which, in 2013 organized the first Conference

of Rotary Clubs of European cities whose historic center has been declared a UNESCO heritage site. This was in order to provide answers to the various issues that membership in UNESCO sites entails. After that first meeting attended by about 20 clubs representing as many UNESCO cities, other meetings have been held biennially and on different topics: in 2015 in Istanbul (Turkey), in 2017 in Florence (Italy), in 2019 in Zamosc (Poland) and in 2023 in the three locations of Siena-Pienza-San Gimignano (Italy).

Each conference had a different program, but what the conferences all had and have in common is “How can we, as Rotarians, contribute to the Peace, Sustainability through sharing our knowledge of protection, improvement and sustainable use of our World Heritage Cities.

I am honoured that we were entrusted with the organisation of this conference. For me, personally, it incapsulates fellowship and community service (both locally and international) for the good of creating international understanding and peace, knowledge about sustainability and contributing to opportunities for local economic and social development in our World Heritage Cities. With the power of Fellowship we bring together our expertise to address challenges and formulate and share ideas for opportunities. That, dear attendees, is the power of Rotary.

Dear attendees, let me leave it with these words. I only would like to add my hope that the power of Rotary will contribute to this conference.

I wish you a good conference that will feed you with Rotary spirit.

Thank you