

**Speech by the president designate of FEACO, Rémi Redley, given on the occasion of his election in Lisboa/Portugal
22 May 2002 during the lunch buffet**

Mr. Presidents,
Friends, Colleagues,

I would like to begin by expressing my thanks for the confidence that you have all placed in me and my team on the Executive Committee. May I introduce myself briefly to all of you who perhaps don't know too much about me.

My name is Rémi Redley and I have been a Berlin-based management consultant for over 20 years. I am also president of the BDU, the German Association of Management Consultants, the largest association of its kind in the world.

It is for good reason that I call myself a European of Dutch provenience (origin). My maternal grandparents came from Hungary and France and lived in Austria, the ancestors of my paternal grandparents were from Flanders and Italy. My mother was born in Lubljana and my father in Rotterdam. I myself was born in Rotterdam and my brother in Zurich. I grew up in Israel, Switzerland, Austria, Holland, and Italy. The profession of my parents and my own profession have taken me to many different countries and my company has been based in Berlin since 1978.

After the outstanding presidency of our colleague and friend Gil Gidron, future leadership of FEACO will be a tremendous challenge. To follow in his footsteps won't be easy. Nonetheless, this is a challenge that I am looking forward to taking up.

The times in which we are now living have not become any easier. I know from colleagues in other associations that critical questions as to the advantages of membership of international federations are frequently asked, and this is a challenge we will continue to face. My own view is that it is very important to have an organisation in Europe that is able to join forces and provide a collective voice in dealings with individual states and the European Community, and campaign for the concerns of our profession.

Both personally and as president of the BDU, I have been advocating European integration more strongly for quite some time now. Harmonisation of citizens' rights and taxes in Europe are an essential aspect in this context. Many of us living in EU countries of which we are not citizens do not have full citizens' rights and are often disadvantaged by the absence of a double taxation convention. This is no longer acceptable in a united Europe with a single currency. You all know the challenges we face when we send employees to subsidiaries in another Community country for any period of time. Differing practices in the areas of taxation, social legislation, labour laws, the right to vote and to stand for election are just a few of many examples. It certainly won't be possible to change everything immediately, but we must begin the process of convincing the political establishment of the need for such changes.

I see the principal task of FEACO in supporting the creation of networks between the members companies of the national associations and in regular exchange of experience between affiliated consultant associations. In this context, there are plans to increase involvement of member associations not represented on the Executive Committee in its meetings in future. Only in this way can necessary contacts and exchange of experience be guaranteed. I am particularly thinking of pre-meeting evening get-togethers that provide an opportunity for informal discussion.

Another important matter is continued intensive maintenance and development of contacts established with the European Commission and other European institutions over the past years. Here, however, the focus should lie on the professional interests of members rather than on shaping the framework conditions of specific EU programmes.

In order to make progress on all these matters, we have set up what we have called a multi-national task force. A group headed by my friend André Wohlgemuth from Switzerland has already established itself from among the ranks of the smaller national member companies. I very much hope that this will lead to further initiatives serving the good and interests of the members of the national associations.

A further vital building block in planned activities will be collaboration between ICMCI and FEACO at European level. Many of our members belong to both organisations, and as management consultants we should be in a position to combine differing interests and potential risks to develop an effective spearhead for the benefit of all concerned.

In conclusion, I am pleased to be able to announce very good news to you. The General Assembly today elected Gil Gidron as the first honorary president of FEACO. Please join me in congratulating him.

Well, I think I've kept you away from your lunch for long enough. Thank you for your attention. I hope that you enjoy your lunch and, in particular, that our FEACO conference here in Lisbon is a success.