

Ed NOORT
Vice-President of ALLEA
Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences

ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

*Your Excellencies,
dear President Momir Durovic,
distinguished and dear Colleagues,*

The minutes of the General Assembly of ALLEA on March 26, 2004 read as follows: “ALLEA President Drenth declares that delegations of ALLEA have made site visits at four candidate members, among them *the Serbian Academy of Sciences, the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts* and that open and excellent discussions have led to satisfactory conclusions on the acceptability of the Academies as Member of ALLEA. The Steering Committee, after taking cognisance of the respective reports and after thorough discussions, unanimously decided to propose the General Assembly to accept the candidate Members. The proposal is agreed unanimously.”

This means the Montenegrin Academy celebrates next week a ten years membership of ALLEA. During these years your Academy was an active member. You participated in the General Assemblies, you organised meetings and conferences and even today we start a huge conference with an ambitious theme: “Transition to a New Society”. We live in a world in transition, in a globalized world with enormous challenges.

We have the eight [1]¹ Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations, with the target date of 2015 now only one year away. We have the great challenges of the ambitious program of the European Union Horizon 2020, the framework

¹ 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. 2. achieve universal primary education. 3. promote gender equality and empower women. 4. Reduce child mortality 5. improve maternal health. 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. 7 ensure environmental sustainability. 8. Global partnership for development.

program with a funding of nearly eighty billion euro's, aiming at a single market for knowledge, research and innovation.

At the same time changes in the organization of research and development in the particular countries have been made. Speaking for my own country, the Netherlands, we see remarkable shifts. The nine top priorities of research, the fields of agriculture and food, chemistry, creative industry, energy, high tech, logistics, life sciences and health, water, and horticulture, does not belong anylonger to the ministry of education, culture and research, but to the ministry of economics. Of course research has to be paid and cooperation with industry is a must for innovation. However, when research will be narrowed to a profit-making undertaking and curiosity driven research will be more and more excluded, we live in a poorer world.

This does not mean that the world of science is the best of all possible worlds. We do have real problems with "the tools of measuring scientific output in certain disciplines, with the publish-or-perish culture in several fields, with the level of mass academic teaching, with the scarcity of career opportunities for young scholars, with the impact of science on policy, and as already meentioned, with the relationship between science, society and industry." [2] ²

In this situation we are in need of visions, directions where to go and how to get there. Of course we are aware of the financial crisis and the limitations of financing research. But our goals for a society in transition should move behind the horizon of financial limits. I am standing here as a representative of the European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities, ALLEA, and we are happy to have our honorary President, Pieter Drenth, and our former president, Juri Engelbrecht amidst us.

Academies with their different fields of interest and research are excellent places of exchange for those in need of a vision for societies in transition. Therefore we are very grateful that the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts offers us the opportunity for such an exchange. Having a look at the program, I noticed many voices from different positions, fields and countries. That is not a problem, but an opportunity.

Montenegro, with its rich history and its influences from East and West, is the place to be for the coming two days.

Thank you so much for your attention.

² Main points of the movement "Science in Transition" in the Netherlands.