

President's report - General meeting Stockholm 29th November 2008

Dear friends, dear members

I have never imagined to lead someday a mountain guides meeting on a ship. Fortunately this ship is in a harbour... even if I am at the helm, it's on quiet water and therefore I want to thank the Swedish, for having chosen a well anchored ship in this wonderful harbour of Stockholm.

This time we have the honour to be welcomed by our Swedish friends. We are not in the heart of the mountains, but still I think that we feel good among you because you have created a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Once more our organization around our profession gives us the chance of living good moments and that's what we should appreciate.

The Swedish mountain guides association is one of the younger members of the federation, but it is an example of a new generation of dynamic guides who are all animated by the common passion for the mountains. We count on you also for the future of our profession.

1/ The new IFMGA standard:

This year we have focused our work on the re-writing of the IFMGA standard: it is a huge work which has been realized and which was conducted with a lot of enthusiasm and knowledge by Alexis Mallon in his function as president of the technical commission. Of course this standard still needs to be improved, but yesterday it was discussed very detailed and it seems to be ready for being proposed to the current meeting of the delegates today in order to take a vote.

Right after a last discussion I'm going to ask you to approve the IFMGA standard, not as a definite document, but for a testing period of 6 months until the spring meeting in Engelberg. This standard builds the foundations of our union (a solid structure with the quality as content). Somehow it is the mirror of our skills, of our credibility and of our collective authorization.

This is what guarantees our « stamp of quality » across the borders and for all the time we've been moving in the mountains.

2/ The new structure of the managing committee and the realization of the new means

On the occasion of the meeting of La Grave we decided to modify the statutes the way to allow a better collective work within the managing committee. With the same idea we also accepted to give new financial means to its realization.

During the last six months we have been working on these points and today we are ready to present a modification of the statutes as well as new financial regulations to you.

3/ The cooperation and the development of quality

The federation has always been open to new mountain countries which want to become a member of the IFMGA. That's one of the fundamentals of our organization and probably it's the most characteristic one.

It's also a great commitment to unite the world of the guides.

We have to realize this issue by proving generosity, ability for changes and at the same time strictness and high demands.

Generosity and ability for changes in order to meet in every country those who want to practice the profession as a mountain guide such as we do.

Strictness and high demands respecting our criteria of our standard and in order to make the training system continue.

Every day that goes by teaches us that our actions have to be embedded in a compatible duration with the acquisition of the collective professional autonomy guaranteed and reliable through a solid anchor in the concerned countries.

This is the way we have proceeded this year in our relationships with the South American countries, but also with Nepal or the European countries about which we are going to talk later.

I would like to close my report with thanks to Armin, Hermann and Alexis for the work they've done, for being ready to listen and for the support they give me in my work. After this general meeting we start the last year of the French presidency, it is therefore a transitional year. In fall 2009 our Swiss friends will have to lead the roped party... We will do everything for a harmonic and productive change of the presidency.

Many thanks also to all of you who are here today, thanks for having made the journey to this place to attend the meeting of the IFMGA. I am filled with enthusiasm and I believe that we can be proud of this.