

Dare to Share Fair

## **Introduction, Opening of the Fair**

"Lichthof DEZA", March 30, 2004, 09.00 by Remo Gautschi, Deputy Head of SDC

### **Check against Delivery**

Ladies and gentlemen,  
dear friends,

Fairs - that is what I found searching the Internet - have become less important today. In historic times, they were created to solve the early problems of distribution. They provided an opportunity for the demonstration of skills and crafts, for the exchange of ideas and for the bartering of goods. As they have lost their importance – we know it, shopping malls are cropping up everywhere - they sometimes evolved into religious festivals of sites for recreation and amusements.

I ask myself: is this Fair anachronistic? Is it a kind of a religious festival? Is pure amusement and recreation at the heart of this event?

Or does it open a new area of fairs, where people look for an alternative to hiding behind their computer screens, where they start to do what in medieval times was common: they exchange their ideas and demonstrate their skills and crafts. Knowledge seems to be the new item that is to be distributed via such Fairs.

I would like to welcome you all [in the name of our Director and of all SDC collaborators] here in our offices in Berne.

You have accepted our invitation to participate in this Fair and have – and I assume for good reasons - partly made long journeys to come to Berne. Knowledge sharing and the ways on how to do it is obviously high on your agendas. Such is the case as well for SDC.

Sharing of knowledge, exchanging experiences is part of the everyday activities or should at least be. Such an event, however, is unique. The more it will important, that it serves the building and strengthening of contacts, collaborations, networks.

Before I open officially this Fair let me take up some of the challenges, that are related to this Dare to Share Fair:

The expression "dare", at first sight rather astonishingly, relates to taking a risk. We do not share automatically but we "dare" to do it. I would not go into the psychology of people sharing their knowledge and to the risks that are built in. If, however, outcomes of sharing of experiences and of learning are changes in our ways of doing things, in ways of looking at things, then I understand the risky element of the word "dare". And I would call upon all of us to take up the risk!

The word "share" relates to the fact that there is something, an experience, a particular insight that is worth sharing. "Sharing", however, not just with anybody – that might at times as well be important – but with people interested, with people that are in need of and that might have a particular use of it. It's not that everybody is sharing everything with everybody. Sharing includes those who might have an interest. Sharing is not confined to our organisations but goes beyond. It include those people we are concerned with, basically the poorer of the societies in the South and the East. Or even more: it is our duty to promote sharing and learning among them.

The word "Fair", finally, could look like a new label, a kind of a new software, the "fairware", suggesting that knowledge sharing requires such an infrastructure. This may definitely not be the case. Such a Fair might be the starting point, creating a momentum for exchange. Saying this, the Fair calls upon all of us just to do it, directly. Let us take the Fair as a starting point!

Now I would like to invite you to enter the Fair! I officially declare the Fair open. 🚦