

Welcome address by Dr Pascal Kintz,

TIAFT President

Dear Majda

Dear Organizing committee and local persons

Dear friends and colleagues

On behalf of the TIAFT board, it is my great pleasure to address you these short words.

I am delighted to have the privilege to welcome you all to the forty fourth meeting of the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists. This is the first time that Slovenia will host the most important annual event of our discipline.

This meeting will offer a unique opportunity to share knowledge and experiences with colleagues from all round the world, bringing together the vast expertise of scientists actively working in the various fields of Forensic Toxicology.

The registration information indicates that individuals from about 40 countries will be attending the meeting, making it a truly international affair. These scientists, coming from the 5 continents, will produce numerous oral and poster presentations, covering a broad spectrum of interests in Forensic Toxicology. In advance, all the presenters are to be congratulated on their stimulating communications. It is hoped this, combined with the hard selection of papers, will make the meeting scientifically rewarding for each participant.

To host here, in Ljubljana, more than 250 participants the Organizing Committee has continually worked since several years. Please, let me tell you how much I am proud of the Slovenian team that have given their time, their ideas, their feelings and even sometimes their anxiety to make a complete success of the conference. Congratulations to you Majda and to all your group. You deserve our sincere thanks and the respect associated with this difficult task.

This congress in Ljubljana has served as the most vigorous of motives that has prompted toxicologists from various part of the world to come along for the first time to TIAFT in order

to share with us the universal toxicology concerns. I do hope that those who are attending for the first time will feel at home and soon become TIAFT regular members.

I am very pleased to notice that Slovenia will host the most active forensic toxicologists. Almost all the "big" names of the discipline are here present.

I believe some words must also be spent to address our warm thanks to the numerous sponsors, that are supporting this conference. Their financial assistance enabled TIAFT to offer an exciting meeting.

While Slovenia might be a tiny dot on the globe, look closer and you will find something for everyone. Europe's best-kept secret is a land of business and pleasure with its head in the sunlit Alps and its toes in the warm Adriatic. Lying midway between Venice and Vienna, Slovenia is firmly at the heart of Europe and is surprisingly diverse for such a compact country.

Ljubljana is an important congress city. Still today, it seems to be proud of the Congress of the Holy Alliance, which brought the most prominent European statesmen of the time to Ljubljana at the beginning of the 19th century.

When the French under the command of Napoleon Bonaparte occupied Carniola, Ljubljana became the capital of the Illyrian Provinces for four years (1809-1813).

It is my sincere hope and belief that Ljubljana 2006 will contribute to the development of forensic toxicology and will be the right place to make new contacts, to nurture old ones or simply to meet others who share the same concerns.

In the hope that the efforts of the organizing committee will correspond to your expectations, I would like to express my gratitude to Majda and her team for the excellent collaboration with the TIAFT board and to extend my sincere appreciation to all of you who are present.

I, as well as the TIAFT board, welcome you in Ljubljana.