

OPENING SPEECH

ECAD / WFAD, Stockholm May 19th 2014

Your Royal Highness, Mayors and all the rest!

It is with great pleasure that I greet you all as chairman of one of three organizers of conference: ECAD.

The Mayor of Stockholm took the lead twenty years back, when the first Mayor's Conference took place here in Stockholm. The Advisory Board of ECAD really appreciates the efforts of the City for the noble cause of Drugfree societies. The presence of the Queen of Sweden strongly underlines Sweden's leading role in our common efforts to build drugfree societies. We thank you for this role, and for the Queen's willingness to be the patroness of the European Cities Network for Drugfreedom.

And we salute the Mayor of Stockholm for your leadership and support for the last 20 years.

At this 20-year Jubilee of ECAD, we are proud to join with the World Federation for this conference. We have a common vision of ending the use of illicit drugs. While ECAD concentrates on the European scene, we recognize that our vision is global, and it is inspiring for us to be here, together.

ECAD needs a renewal. We are proud of our 80 European cities and towns who are paid-up members – and of the fact that 230 cities are signatories to the ECAD statement. But it is a fact that West European cities today are not member cities. This must change, and the AB puts forward to you in our session today a strategy plan for recruiting more member cities.

We also launch what we call the NEW ECAD – a more democratic network and a new name. Our proposal is that ECAD from today should stand for European Cities Action network for Drugfree societies. We are and still will be against drugs. We simply want to stop the killing of our young people and the destruction of our communities. But it is better to state our vision than our nightmare! We have a positive goal, not a negative one!

Let this Conference be the start of NEW ECAD. Let the example of Stockholm – 20 years ago as well as today – stand before us and inspire us all in the important European and global efforts for a brighter future in drugfree cities all over the globe.

Thank you.