

24th International Montessori Congress

Paris, France, 2-4 July 2001



CONGRESS OPENING

Mrs Marie-Louise Pasquier

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this day, July 2nd 2001, I declare the 24th International Montessori Congress in Paris officially open.

This Congress is placed under the high patronage of UNESCO and has the support of the Minister of Education, Mr Jack LANG. It is organised by Association Montessori de France and the Institut Supérieur Maria Montessori, under the auspices of Association Montessori Internationale.

We wish to thank Mr. Koïchiro MATSUURA, Director General of UNESCO and Mr. BOYER of the National Commission. Maria Montessori took part in the foundation of this great institution – UNESCO: United Nations for Education, Science, and Culture.

We have been made to feel particularly welcome here, thank you.

Welcome to all of you here today and thank you for your presence. I would like to remind you that the last International Montessori Congress to take place in Paris was in May 1953 and that it was greatly aided and supported by personalities of the time including the Minister of Education: Mr André MARY.

I wish to pay a special tribute to Mrs BERNHEIM and Mrs Georgette BERNARD who with their families created the first Childrens' Houses in France, and also translated the works of Maria Montessori into French.

Special thanks also to Mrs Anne-Marie Gillet BERNARD, the first person in charge of the International Montessori Training Course in France, permitting the training of teachers in France.

I wish to thank all our speakers from all the Continents as well as France, who honour us by participating in this 24th Congress. The topic that we have chosen for this Congress is « Education as an Aid to Life ».

This topic, seemingly simple, is very demanding. To aid Life: a noble task, and one that calls for reflexion, for choice, for thoughtfulness and continuity in action and for much Love.

The beginning of 20th century saw the discoveries and work of this 'lady doctor', Maria Montessori, who showed us the true means through which we could contribute to Life. May this Congress, enriched by the work and the research carried out during the 20th Century, pay tribute, in this 21st Century, to this great lady.

May we continue together the noble task of educating while acknowledging the effectiveness of an Education aided by well-applied psychology.

We would like to honour the Teachers who have successfully passed examinations and obtained the International Diploma who are present at this Congress and also those who could not be here. May their work be recognized and may they be enriched by these three days.

The Association Montessori de France (A.M.F.), created in 1950, and all its members, wishes to thank all the families who have allowed us, and helped us, to create Childrens' Houses and who support the Association. Thank you.

As President of the Organizing Committee of CIM 2001, I welcome:

- the Director of the Institut Supérieur Maria Montessori (I.S.M.M.),
Mrs SPINELLI-DELIVRE,
- the president of the Association Montessori Internationale (A.M.I.),
Mrs Renilde MONTESSORI,
- Mrs. Ingeborg BREINES, representing the Director of UNESCO and
- Mr. Jean-Paul VILAIN, representing Mr. Jack Lang, Minister of Education