

***Presidential address by the
President of the European Federation of Sports Medicine Associations
Dr. Maurizio Casasco***

*Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,
Dear Friends,*

As newly elected President of the European Federation of Sports Medicine Associations, it is for me a pleasure and a great honour to address you, EFSMA Member National Associations Representatives participants to the Council of Delegates here in Cascais.

Let me say that I feel particularly proud and honoured, not only to make a speech for the first time as EFSMA President, but also because my election coincides with the celebration of the twentieth Anniversary of EFSMA, which was founded here in Portugal in 1998.

As we all know, sport includes all forms of human movement aimed to express, maintain or improve physical fitness and performance, as well as mental well-being.

Sport is also part of the creation or improvement of social relationships in leisure, competition, the enhancement of health maintenance, and in the prevention and treatment of different diseases.

In this context, our work is addressed to the protection of the athletes' health, so that they may safely compete in sporting events, and to the fight against doping in sport.

Thus, we are all aware that the responsibilities of sports medicine are increasing in recreational and competitive sports.

Consequently, in this respect, I am proud how over recent years EFSMA has grown in terms of reliability, thanks to its efforts in disseminating the principles of motivation, performance, and the health aspects of all people engaged in sport and physical activity.

Let me express my gratitude to all my Colleagues of the Executive, where I served in the last mandate as a Vice President, and to my predecessors, my Friends Debruyne, Cummiskey and Bachl for their exceptional commitment to achieve important milestones.

Much has been done, but without a doubt the most important success for EFSMA will be the recognition of Sports Medicine as a primary specialty in the European Union.

This process started during the Presidency of Professor Bachl and has received remarkable support from his successors as well as from the European Union of Medical Specialists - UEMS - and its Chairman of the MJC on Sports Medicine, my Friend Professor Nicolas Christodoulou.

At this advanced stage on the way to the recognition, I would like to reaffirm my commitment as EFSMA President to continue the excellent work done so far, taking also the opportunity offered by my close friendship with the Italian President of the European Parliament, the Honourable Tajani, who has always been supportive of the sports movement and its needs.

Furthermore, I would like to affirm my full responsibility to strongly sustain the educational and scientific projects carried out by EFSMA so far, from the European Congresses, to be efficiently further developed as the ideal platform for exchange and discussion on major topics of interest for the international sports medicine community, to the "*Exercise Prescription for Health*" programme, which also symbolizes our shared Hippocratic vision of personalized medicine our concept of "*Exercise Prescription for Health*" is very different from that of "*Exercise is Medicine*"!

I would like to stress that Europe is the homeland and guardian of the cultural concept of prescribing physical exercise in the right amount as we do for the use of a medicine.

We must always be aware that all these initiatives function as continental multipliers and ambassadors of EFSMA's vision and mission and help to achieve our objectives in all parts of the world, fostering also participation and motivation by all the European Sports Medicine Community.

In this regard, I would like also to stress the strong attention provided by the European Union policy to HEPA (Health Enhancing Physical Activity) initiatives so far, which is testified also by the relevant Recommendation made by the European Union Council on 26 November 2013 and subsequent indications.

With respect to our position at international level, I do not want to forget my intention to continue to strengthen EFSMA's support to the International Federation of Sports Medicine, our global "*Homeland*", which our Continental group has always provided.

This cooperation and partnership is testified not only by the relevant strong European leadership in FIMS since its foundation but also by the highest number of FIMS Member National Associations belonging to our continent.

I would also like to mention EFSMA'S definitive settlement of its legal establishment at the Maison du Sport Internationale in Lausanne at FIMS Headquarters, a significant return to the roots in the land where International Sports Medicine was founded in 1928, during the Winter Olympic Games held in Saint Moritz.

This achievement will surely contribute to strengthening the relationship with the sport, scientific and medical communities and with the existing leading International Bodies.

At the finishing line of my speech, allow me to express my most sincere gratitude to the Italian Federation of Sports Medicine, as prime mover of the excellence achieved by Italian Sports Medicine.

In this regard, let me also mention two great Friends who have strongly supported me in the past decades: Professor Arsenio Veicsteinas, very well known in our European community, who sadly passed away a few weeks ago, and Professor Fabio Pigozzi, President of the International Federation of Sports Medicine.

Let me just say that, with him, since the very beginning of our longstanding friendship and cooperation, we have shared a global long-term vision based on the aim to provide high-qualification education and to implement best practice sports medicine principles.

In conclusion, with this spirit and in the name of the European Federation of Sports Medicine, I would like to express to you all my gratefulness and sincere appreciation for your support.

To the newly elected Executive Committee Members go my personal good wishes to continue the excellent work done so far.

I am confident that we will achieve much together.

Thank you all very much.