

Drucker Forum 2013 – Opening speech RS

Welcome to all of you to the 5 th Global Peter Drucker Forum - welcome to you here in the auditorium and welcome to all those on our live stream. In addition to the 350 participants present in the auditorium we have some 1000 participants registered for the live stream.

It is with quite some emotion that I am addressing you – almost by the way 5 years ago we began something which we hoped would become a journey – exactly in this place. Today I can confirm that the Global Peter Drucker Forum has become a centre of gravity and a recognized platform to bring together the greatest management thinkers and practitioners to exchange their thoughts and to provide their input for shaping the future. In today's complex and unpredictable world the importance of how we take decisions, how we make the right strategic choices, how we shape organizations to achieve desired results, how we manage and mitigate risks has become more important than ever. Peter Drucker has shown the utmost importance of sound management of the institutions of our society be it economic or non-economic in his first important work *The End of Economic Man* and *The Future of Industrial Man*. Peter Drucker came to the conclusion that the very survival of society depends on the performance, the competence, the earnestness and the values of their managers.

During the last years bad management and flawed or rather no values have almost precipitated us into a global catastrophe of unseen dimensions. Today we seem to have forgotten how fragile our situation has become. The party seems to go on – and greed and self-serving behaviours are still dominating big business and politics. Inequalities in our societies are growing. Youth unemployment in Europe has reached a peak. Not a good basis for creating a functioning society as Peter Drucker called it.

Despite some gloomy thoughts that anybody might easily get when looking at today's situation there are bright spots – that give reasons for hope. Most importantly they lie in the younger generations who take a different look at the world as they yearn for meaning and purpose. To spend one's life with the sole objective to make a lot of money may not be considered enough by coming generations. We are happy to have a significant group of the new generations joining – more than 30 winners of the Drucker challenge contest. The new generation will have it in their hands to shape the future. However, as Einstein put it: "We *can't solve problems* by using the *same* kind of thinking we used when we created them. This is the challenge for the new generations. We had a purpose when we positioned the theme for the Drucker Challenge contest at the intersection of business, science and the arts.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in the coming two days we would like to take you on a journey that should contribute to better equip you to cope with the new challenges and to help to find your answers. I emphasize YOUR answers – because there are no ready-made recipes. When Drucker asked after a day of intensive discussion in a consultation mode with senior executives: tell me what you will do differently next Monday, he did not mean that he had given them any recipe to change things on Monday, but he meant that he had given them insights and clues to think through from a new perspective the problems and issues they are facing. Don't expect ready made answers; rather expect input to ask better questions.

The Drucker Forum has now reached the point where we seem to be increasingly heard and perceived as a force contributing to shape the future of management. But we would not have got there if we had not the support of great partners and sponsors. We are a non-profit

organization but as Drucker already has pointed out – even as such we need a business model to fund our activities and to invest into the future. We are grateful and thank them. However, I may say that our sponsors receive value for their sponsorship from us as well as we gain global recognition.

Lastly, we would not be here today wouldn't we have had the unconditional support from the the Drucker Institute in Claremont and the Drucker Family. The Drucker Institute – here represented by its executive director Rick Wartzman – provided us with the opportunity to organize this annual Forum as the Global Peter Drucker Forum – there is no other Forum who has authority to do this. However, most gratifying for us is to have received the endorsement and trust of the Drucker Family – first and foremost from Doris Drucker who turned 102 years in June.

With this I wish us all a successful and beneficial Forum where I hope you can draw value for the future for your role as a manager, an entrepreneur. an executive and as a human being. Thank you.