

Welcoming Speech from the Rector of the University of Münster
Rector Magnificus Prof. Dr. H. U. Erichsen

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you on the occasion of your annual conference here in Münster to this University. We are proud that the Association for Medical Education in Europe, as well as the Association of Medical Deans, decided to hold their conference this year in this University town. Referring to what has been said already, let me mention a significant pattern in my point of view as far as medical education is concerned. That is that medical students intend to change or to integrate a study abroad with their academic education. One of your workshops will be dealing with this subject which has now become very important to all faculties. The year 1992 was fixed by the European Community as a sort of deadline to accomplish the requirement of an integrated Common Market. Such integration means as far as the academic sector is concerned, introducing measures in order to allow everybody to live in a member country in the European Community and to obtain academic education wherever he or she wants to.

The international impact on medical education at this University has a long tradition. This University has entered into medical related partnerships and similar agreements with the Universities of Lille II, Twente Enschede, Santo Tomós in Bogota, Colombia, Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil, Oviedo in Spain, with the Osaka Medical College, with Monastir in Tunisia, with Krakow in Poland and other Medical Faculties and Medical Schools.

The experiences of an Medical Department or Faculty will serve as a model for younger disciplines facing the challenge of the European Community.

In some disciplines, I do not know whether in Medicine, the model of an integrated study is now being discussed. This means that some students of one university go to a foreign partner university, where they study one year with full recognition of credits. Some disciplines are even contemplating the mutual conferring of academic degrees. Thus those students would obtain two equivalent degrees after having finished their studies by passing their final examination.

Unfortunately it has become very difficult for our students in the Federal Republic of Germany to plan their studies since different reform drafts in respect to the act regulating the admittance to the medical profession are now being discussed. It is very difficult if not impossible to recognize a guarding line in this discussion although a regulation in the European Community requires implementation of certain standards by 1990. Therefore we hope that the present Conference on medical education will have the effect of bringing forward the discussion of medical education in the Federal Republic.

The Medical Faculty of this University and I would like to stress that the Medical Faculty is an integrated part of the University. It now has an enrollment of over 5000 students, making it one of our largest departments. Affiliated to the Faculty is one of the biggest university hospitals in the Federal Republic of Germany. The "Bed-Towers", which were completed in 1982, have already become a landmark of this town. This "Klinikum", which we are in now, provides top medical service to more than 400,000 inhabitants of the Northwest German region. The central building has a capacity of over 1000 beds and in addition, more than 700 beds are available in the other, much older (approx. 60 years old) buildings of the "Klinikum".

I hope that your schedule, which seems to me to be already rather full with sessions, discussions, and other features will leave you the chance to at least take a look at some parts of our Klinikum. Perhaps you will also have the chance in the next few days to visit the centre of Münster with the Cathedral and its old buildings in the Prinzipalmarkt.

I wish you all the best for your stay here in Münster. I hope that you will profit from this conference and that your discussions will contribute to the efforts to improve international cooperation in Medical Education, which will help us all to face the challenges of the future.

Thank you.