



Nunzio Scibilia

District Governor
2016-2017

Palermo, December 1st, 2016

My dear friends in Rotary,

December is the month of Disease Prevention and Treatment. The World Health Organization (WHO) defined sanitary education as *'the process that gives all populations the means for assuring a major control over their level of health and the means for improving it'*. The term *'education'* is therefore important to indicate the correct way to be followed for acquiring notions that are useful in order to improve personal and collective health.

Rotary International, through the tireless activity of Rotarians has always been involved in making sanitary assistance available to hundreds of thousands of disadvantaged people in the world.

Our main priority is, and remains, the eradication of Polio. Since the launch of this global initiative against this terrible disease, by Rotary and its prestigious partners, more than 30 years ago, the incidence of the illness had fallen by more than 99.9% and from approximately 350,000 registered cases per year to only 26 ascertained cases in the month of September 2016.

In order to sustain this progress and to protect all children from polio, experts believe that one and a half million dollars are still required. Without full financial support and social and political commitment this terrible paralyzing illness could re-emerge in countries considered *"polio free"*, endangering the existence of other children in the world. The challenge continues.

Prevention and cure of the disease come in various forms from financing studies to the inoculation of the vaccine to persons who are at risk, from the improvement of hygienic services to the provision of clean water. The World looks at Rotary for facing these global challenges and for indications on how to face these problems in a rational manner.

Our members take on ever growing responsibilities in order to fight many other pathologies. Training centres for medics, paramedics and sanitary operators are set up directly in developing countries and within communities that are particularly deprived. Furthermore, Rotarians seriously collaborate with governments to set up the necessary structures to satisfy the needs of those populations that are not yet equipped with the instruments essential to handle their health needs in the correct and rational manner.

This is who we are: We are a global network of a million two hundred volunteers who, in more than 200 countries, are committed to face some of the most urgent humanitarian challenges in the effort to improve the lives of those who are most in need, both locally and internationally.

As Christmas and the New Year approach, I wish to extend to you and all your families on behalf of *Antonella*, my *Staff* and my personal self, the warmest wishes. May your lives be rich in serenity and love.

I wish our young **Rotaractors** and **Interactors** and all the **New Generations** the best of luck for their good fortune is our good fortune.

With his motto, President **John F. Germ**, suggests a particular gift to be made to the world. Let us follow his advice and **Serving Humanity**, always and not only at Christmas.

My warmest wishes,