

Current Concerns

P.O. box 223
CH-8044 Zurich
+41-44-350 65 50

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Leading the Youth to the Values of Humanity, Solidarity and Civil Courage

Opening of the birthday celebration for Henry Dunant and start off to the "Dunant Year 2010"

Address by Norbert Näf, communal president of Heiden and president of the Dunant Year 2010, 8 May 2010

Dear Dr. Kellenberger

Appreciated Councillors of States

Appreciated President of the Council of States

Dear Landamman, dear members of the Cantonal Government

Appreciated Councillors of States, members of the Heiden Communal Council and other communal councils

Beloved Häädlers

Appreciated guests from far and wide

I am unspeakably proud of having the opportunity to welcome you to the birthday celebration for Henry Dunant and to the opening of the Dunant Year 2010 in Heiden. The hammer dulcinea orchestra of the Appenzell music school gave you a first taste of its skills playing a theme from the Jupiter Symphonie of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Thank you so much for it! We will hear more of these young artists in the process of the ceremony.

As you see: already with our address of welcome, we pit on the youth. The principal purpose of the Dunant Year is to bring – in a manifold way – the values of humanity, solidarity and civil courage to the people, in particular to children and young people and to have these important values further developed by the young generation. Almost five years ago, when celebrating the 1st August of 2005, I proclaimed the Dunant Year 2010. At that time it was not yet clear to me which consequences this statement would have.

After a workshop, which resulted in over 50 ideas for activities, and the foundation of the association "Dunant Year 2010" half a year later, approximately 40 volunteers worked out five meetings, two exhibitions and the already famous art action including the (round) tables for private peace talks. Today, the movement Dunant-Year covers more than 150 members. More than 300 people – children, young people, adults, artists or federal/national councillors – demonstrated their solidarity with the values of Henry Dunant by painting a red cross. The first of these pictures can be purchased at an auction today in the reading hall in the basement of our Kursaal. Let me thank all participants of the executive committee and the many working groups for their enormous commitment; thanks to all, who have supported our activities financially, and the members of the patronage committee.

Without this work we might not be here today, giving expression to our joy. In place of all participants, I beg our project coordinator, Mrs. Monika Gessler, to come on to the stage. She has a similarity with Henry Dunant. Today, she is also celebrates her birthday. Some days ago, during a project week about Henry Dunant, I was asked by young people of the secondary school to give them an interview for a video projection. They asked me what humanity and solidarity meant for me and whether I had, once in my life, given proof of civil courage. Ladies and Gentlemen, I started stammering. I also appeal to you to think about how you can show solidarity at work or during your leisure time, in your family or partnership.

The Dunant Year should show us joyfully and with relish all that Henry Dunant wants to tell us today.

Thus, already today you will see civil courage put into scene or you can enjoy the choir project "Give Peace A Chance". Likewise, about 15 and 19 o'clock this stage belongs to the rap performance of our courageous young people. At the information stand in the entrance Hall, you will find detailed information about the programme of the birthday celebration for Henry Dunant, or you may listen to the regular loudspeaker announcements on the street. You can treat yourself to some fine meals prepared by the many associations and restaurants with their international food that fits the topic.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am proud that things are getting finally started. I am proud of all the superb projects and the work of all the people, who are behind it. The Dunant Year does not only consist of many media bang effects, but of projects and activities that are based on sustainability to a large extent. So, in accordance with the value-oriented programme, it is intended to organise a multitude of school trips to Heiden in the coming two years. The international youth camp for humanity and peace is a networking project by and for young people from all over the world. The kidscross in September can take place every year and also be implemented in other places.

We want to maintain and develop the interactive education platform www.dunantwissen.ch during the next years. We are entitled to give away three of the four tables for private peace talks to other regions or countries. There are negotiations running for a table in the German capital Berlin.

Beloved Häädlers, dear guests: You can be pleased about the fact that thanks to Henry Dunant the values of humanity, solidarity and civil courage go on to play an important role in our society. With these words I open the Dunant year 2010!

We are proud that the project Dunant-Year has found entrance into the government program of the canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden.

This shows that our cantonal government backs up the ideals of the Dunant year, having opened many a door for our goals and projects.

Cordial thanks for this support. Now, I'll give the word to Mr. Jakob Brunnschweiler, head of our provincial government, who is

called Landammann here and who was elected directly by the people into this function. I ask him to come onto the stage with our Landweibel (policeman).•

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