

ALL THE BEST IN 2004!



This is the last time that I will speak to you as president of the CTIF, so please accept my best wishes for the New Year.

The CTIF does not belong to the president, but rather serves the common good of the entire international fire and rescue community. Hence, it is each member's responsibility to keep abreast of CTIF issues and to preserve and strengthen its proud legacy, which has been passed from hand to hand for more than a century.

Only your faithful commitment and the result of your hard work can keep the CTIF alive and active, helping it achieve the fame it deserves.

I would like to thank each of you for the great honour you granted to me by entrusting me, along with the other members of your executive committee, the responsibility of leading this great international federation.

Thanks to each of you, throughout the years I have learned many things about fire and rescue techniques. Even though our opinions vary from time-to-time, as long as we take the time to talk and listen to other views, we draw closer to one another.

Working with people from myriad towns, countries and cultures has been a tremendous learning experience. I have had the pleasure of meeting exceptional personalities, as well as everyday fire fighters, first-aid workers and rescuers who showed with great pride their devotion to duty. And, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Youth Fire Brigades whose enthusiasm is a model for us all.

To all who supported me during these sixteen years - members of the executive committee, representatives of National Committees, commission chairmen, organising committees of CTIF events, representatives of governmental bodies and partner associations - I just want to say a big thank! But, above all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the bonds of friendship we created together. This will remain in my memory forever.

I remain available to assist each of you, particularly Walter Egger, whose task will be a difficult one in the next months. Please join with me in giving Walter your unreserved support.

I wish a long and successful life to the CTIF.

And to each of you all to your families, I wish a happy and successful New Year!

François MAURER