

## **Message of the Chair of the Local Organizing Committee**

**Mike Rosner**

Dear LREC 2010 Participants,

On behalf of the Local Advisory Committee, the Local Organising Committee, and all the other participating organisations I would first of all like to express my profound gratitude to His Distinguished Excellency Dr. George Abela, President of Malta, for so kindly agreeing to honour the LREC 2010 by His Patronage and for his offer to assist with the training of a sign-language specialist. I also thank the President of the European Union, Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, for the support he has offered.

About ten years ago, the late Antonio Zampolli had asked me if I would be interested in exploring the possibility of organising LREC 2002 in Malta. I explored for about ten seconds. "I am sorry Antonio", I said, "It's impossible. There would be no support for that kind of conference over here. Come back in ten years and we'll see". With an answer like that I thought I was pretty safe. But it was not to be.

As Chairman of the Local Organising Committee, I am now very proud to acknowledge the help we have received from local organisations and individuals that has made this event possible. In particular, I would like to mention generous financial and material support that has been forthcoming from the Ministry of Finance, the University of Malta, the Malta Tourist Authority, and Air Malta.

In addition to these institutions there is a long list of local individuals to whom we are indebted for the hard work that has turned LREC 2010 from an idea into the reality that you now see unfurling before you. Let us hope it does not unravel completely! I cannot mention them all, but I would like to single out a few in particular: Prof. Juanito Camilleri, Rector of the University, colleagues from the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, from my own Department of Intelligent Computer Systems, and from the Institute of Linguistics; Rosette Micallef and her team, who run this magnificent Mediterranean Conference Centre, Rachel Borg Cardona and Aleksandra Radulovic, of Gollcher Travel, our local destination management company, Nadine Brincat, of the Malta Tourist Authority, Claudia Borg, my personal assistant throughout, who has had to face the hot fires of disagreement coming from all directions simultaneously on several occasions, and last but not least, the student volunteers who are assisting throughout.

I am extremely pleased to have inaugurated a Local Advisory Committee whose members reflect a broad cross section of those having interests that intersect with those of the LREC community. It is my sincere hope that the activities of this Committee will endure beyond the short week of this Conference and will help to establish a permanent home here for language resources, particularly for the Maltese Language.

Of course, all this local support has been received in the context of a truly European collaboration that has provided us with constant guidance and includes all the other members of the Programme Committee, Khalid Choukri, Helene Mazo and ELRA staff in Paris, and the Pisa team headed by Nicoletta Calzolari.

Let me conclude by welcoming you all to Malta. I sincerely hope you all enjoy your visit, and that the arrangements we have made will serve to make LREC 2010 a pleasant and memorable experience both scientifically and socially.

Michael Rosner  
Chair of the Local Organising Committee