

FOUNDATION EDUCATION IN ACTION

Message from the Chairwoman

Each year at UWC Mostar is a unique. Each year the school welcomes some hundred new students who come with all their dreams and hopes, with all their ambitions and fears. And each year the school also sends out to the world some hundred young people with all they have learnt and experienced during their two years in Mostar.

Each year we also welcome new staff members and say good bye to others.

Individuals make up the UWC Mostar. Therefore every year is different and unique. Therefore each year we say thank you all, students, teachers, staff members and volunteers. Thank you also the Gimnazija Mostar and City of Mostar that continues to host us.

UWC Mostar was set to be more than just a school. Therefore UWC Mostar students, teachers and staff are required more than just to finish their daily job. UWC Mostar was set up as part of a broader mission that will influence and inform developments in teacher education and post-conflict educational policies and pedagogical developments.

Therefore individuals here matter even more. You carry on a mission at the time which is in many ways demanding as is the world political order.

There has been one person very crucial to this mission. Valentina was one the founding staff members of UWC Mostar and the head-teacher during the most critical and possibly also most difficult years of



the UWC Mostar. As Valentina used to put it: "I became the captain of the Titanic after it had hit the glacier."

I personally met Valentina years before the college opened. Valentina was introduced as a teacher and peace activist who had moved to Mostar during the war years in 1990s to help her former Yugoslav

country men and women. She became one of the strong and active supporters of the idea to introduce UWC and IB to Mostar and to work on teacher training and societal development and peace building at large.

As all who knew Valentina know her spirit and idealism never failed and she gave herself 100% to the mission to strengthen peace through education in millions of ways.

At the end of this special year we thank her but also trust our work towards common goals will continue in different roles and keep us connected. We say thank you Valentina & stay in touch!

Each year in UWC Mostar is unique. People make the years unique. Thank you all.

**Dr Pilvi Torsti,
Chairwoman of the Board
of the Foundation
Education in Action**

In January an established Finnish Peace negotiator Hussein Al-Taei visited the college. Al-Taei works for CMI, Crisis Management Initiative, an NGO founded by the Nobel Peace Prize winner president Martti Ahtisaari. President Ahtisaari was among the very first supporters of the initiative to set-up a UWC in Bosnia and Herzegovina and his support was critical for securing the start-up phase funding back in 2001.

The idea is to look into possibilities to develop potentially scalable peace education models together in the coming years and at minimum to create an active link between UWC and CMI through Mostar. It is important to recognize the amount of experience and capacity our community has developed over 15 years in post-conflict education, pedagogy and policy!