

Dear Friends,

We have finished the European Lifesaving Championships for Nations.

It is time to recognize the effort of the athletes who have competed, in an atmosphere of fair play and solidarity which has allowed us to enjoy in this wonderful city of Riccione.

Lifesaving is a sport that has an important personal component, but the work of the team also plays an relevant paper in our competitions.

Beside the lifeguard there are coaches, team managers, members of their federations, friends and family who are part of their daily work.

In addition, a european championship is the joint of many people's work for a long time, an effort that has been carried out by the Italian Swimming Federation, allowing Riccione twenty nineteen to have been an organization success in the master's and national teams championships and I have no doubt that interclub championship will be also a great success.

On behalf of the European Lifesaving Federation, I would like to thank everyone for their participation and effort.

In the thirty nine countries that are part of the European Lifesaving Federation, more than twenty thousand people died every year by accidental drownings in aquatic spaces, six thousand of them in the member nations of the European Union.

This is a problem that not all countries decide to face.

For the first time, this year the European Lifesaving Federation has taken a joint action with the celebration of the European Aquatic Safety Week in June.

We must continue to work on prevention, insisting to our governments on the need to take decisive action to prevent this unnecessary loss of lifes on beaches, rivers and swimming pools.

An European Championship is the most important competition that an athlete can participate in our continent, because it is the one where he can represent his country in front of sister nations.

In Riccione we have met twenty three nations of Old Europe, a continent today questioned by division and lack of solidarity.

On the contrary, here we have shown the best of our values, which, as the Treaty on European Union includes, must promote the peace and well-being of our peoples.

There is a person closely linked to this land of Emilia-Romagna who represents that thought, which is linked to the solidarity character of lifesaving.

Andrés Laguna was a Spanish physician who also lived in Germany, France, England, the Netherlands and Italy.

He got a doctorate near here, in Bologna. At a conference he gave in fifteen forty three at the University of Cologne, he advocated a united Europe, capable of solving problems without conflict, and respecting the historical reality of its peoples.

With sportsmanship, fair play, solidarity and friendship, in Riccione we have not only enjoyed a few days of our sport, but we have also built a little more that Europe with which Andrés Laguna dreamed.

Thank you very much.