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*Grüezi and welcome on behalf of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) to the 48<sup>th</sup> World Congress here in Zurich!!!!*

The time has come for Landscape!!!! After a long period of very hard work, our very dear BSLA members and the Municipality of Zurich have accomplished the successful organization of this Magnum Event!

The organization of World Congresses is the central strategy that IFLA is using to achieve its objectives; such as establishing high standards of professional practice in landscape design and planning, landscape conservation and development, as well as the promotion of the international exchange of knowledge, skills and experience in landscape architecture.

The venue, Zurich, could not be better chosen! It is a modern and elegant City with urban flair, simultaneously framed and interwoven with its surrounding landscape! We will have the chance to enjoy Zurich's natural surroundings and wonderful views, including the Lake Zurich and the Alps, which are enchanting landmarks! In addition, we will be able to visit Zurich's green spaces, some of them historic and others linked to the new urban development which has been designed and focused on improved quality of life and recreation.

I have been acquainted with the city of Zurich for a long time and the majority of the memories I have of this city involve the wonderful green public spaces. I had the opportunity to visit Zurich last summer and was truly amazed at the excellent work done by "Grün Stadt Zürich" (the office in charge of public green space)

and the landscape architects in new housing development. Their projects are embedded in a green network together with parks, plazas, greenways along creeks and newly created water bodies illustrating clean, contemporary design and of great esthetic value.

The congress's program has been harmoniously composed and will also be a highlight to those attending. Keynote speakers and general lecturers will present examples of design and research projects representing the most avant-garde in our profession, and responding to SCALES OF NATURE!

Most importantly we will have the opportunity to share our interest in landscape, to laugh together and engage in interesting conversations, to reunite with our friends in landscape, to make new ones and of course, to delight in Swiss gastronomy and in the surrounding landscape.

On behalf of IFLA I deeply thank the organizers for all of the time and effort they have invested, for being so warm hearted, so inclusive and for their support and interest in IFLA's needs and projects! I invite you all, to thoroughly enjoy this outstanding Congress as you would Swiss chocolate!!!

Best regards,

**Desiree Martínez**  
President IFLA, June 2011