

RI District 2452 exciting Rotary Year 2018-2019

Note: This interview was scheduled for GML # June 2018. The publication was postponed to July 2018 because some figures were not discussed and approved by DLP committee chairs. Questions were asked to the District 2452 Governor Michel Jazzar, by past GML Chief editor PP Themis Themistocleous, thanks to him.

1. How do you plan to apply the theme of RI for next year in your objectives as DG?

What does RI President Barry Rassin mean by his theme for RY 2018-2019 **“Be the Inspiration”**?

According to my understanding to the RI President theme, my role as a District Governor is to inspire all the Rotarians in my district whatever their positions or duties are, through motivating them to start taking action towards positive changing, thinking out of the box and find the suitable way to reach their own goals that allied and be more appropriate with the theme.

My vision as DG for year 2018-2019 is to make my district one of the best RI Districts.

We have to set up smart objectives for our District in order to gather all inspiring Rotarians, and let them more involved in implementing and reaching these objectives.

Our District 2452 objectives are defined by a beginning and ending point; these objectives go beyond the day-to-day tasks and describe a result linked to achieving a particular goal at individual, club or District level.

Our objectives are SMART; Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. We will focus on achievement and result rather than a series of actions or tasks. Below I am defining these objectives for RY 2018-2019.

Some questions should be raised by every one of Rotarians members of Clubs forming our large District:

- Who we are? We should revival our past, be proud of our history, even some darks have marked some corners.
- What do we mean by “unique”? We should excel by implementing the term "unique" that we use to describe our district 2452 and be inspired
- Do we know the Rotary core values these invisible roots of our visible local and worldwide projects?
- Do we feel our strength; do we know how much opportunities are offered to us to do the best in the world?
- Can we transcend to invest ourselves for more engagement as Citizens of the world?

- Do we believe that Humanity is one and so to have more empathy to those who are in needs and to be practical within programs and projects in our Areas of Focus?

Yes we are these people, because we feel within others. Yes we want to achieve, because we care of others. Yes we believe in our core values which inspire us more engagement.

What do we mean by saying the others? The wheel of Rotary means movement, it is training others to share our joy, our core values, our expertise, our personality, our knowledge and our experience to assist and help. We must redefine the wheel of Rotary, reinvent it, it is there to bring us closer to each other. A wheel is like a heart!

It is the consciousness of the other? It is the heart that speaks, the hand extended. "Serve above Self", the motto remains frozen till we have the sense of the other! Then the mechanism starts.

We are Rotarians because believe in acting, and it is by going to one another that we can grow with our organization. Humility is a valuable gift we give to a third person. We should feel our passion while acting in the right direction. It's not about money, it's about I'm here for you, two drops of vaccine against polio in the kid's mouth, a cup of safe drinking water, a smile on faces because of sustaining development, also our eyes become brighten when we got self-confidence upon of getting education and we fighting diseases.

2. What do you see as major issues in the district that you plan to address?

Membership: We are floating between stagnation and decreasing. RI President Rassin said "We are a membership organization first. And if we want to be able to serve, if we want to succeed in our goals — we have to take care of our members first." Our target for the membership in District 2450 during RY 2018-2019 is 60+ Rotarians net.

Training: We need new strategy in conducting training and RLI. The District Training Team assists the District to develop leadership skills and increase Rotary knowledge, so that all the Rotarian Leaders and Members in our District can contribute successfully to achieve the goals determined by Rotary International and the Governor for the current year and beyond.

Public Image: The inner District image is suffering from high level egos. We should all of us put our ego into the team's ego and be people of altruists.

Often we have misconception on our organization and fee person in our community knows about Rotary, by which many opportunities can be missed. So Public Image committee aims to help all of us to work together to support our clubs' services near and far and our District's services on behalf of our clubs.

Cliques: Unfortunately they exist. Suffering of such cliques was reported to me and was openly discussed with many Rotarians during PETS from different countries and during my visits to all clubs in Lebanon and at the 5th DC in Paphos, April 2018.

Cliques or little fellowship kill the clubs, and destroy the unicity of Clubs in one Country and in a District. Cliques should be avoided; it's an unacceptable Rotary culture like apathy, negativity, tyranny, egoism, lack of interest and motivation!

Please refer to my address at the closing session in Paphos, on the occasion of the 5th District 2452 Conference, it's much explanatory. We should all change our negative attitude to positivity and control our personal emotions to embrace others and lend our hands to each others.

3. What do you intend to focus on during your term as DG?

3.1- Control our attitudes; understand that in our Country and within our District we are united in diversity; respect of the RI Procedure and Code of policies and don't create conflicts within District; serve with joy; be creative in our projects, be flexible in clubs' attendance focus on accomplishments rather of actions...

Let us resume:

- Less on ego, more on **Accomplishments**
- Less on mandatory Service, more on Service with **Joy**
- Less on disagreement, more on **Respect**

3.2- Rejuvenate the Rotary Leadership Institute in the three counties: Lebanon since 2002, Cyprus and Jordan.

3.3- Start a new RI Program for New Generations. "New Generations Service Exchange"

Increase membership, merge weak clubs, create new and vibrant Rotary Clubs and Rotary Satellite clubs, and seek if extending Rotary to a new country is possible.

3.4- Youth: I believe that youth is the future of our organization, and our future at large.

Our new generation has a different way of life and of thinking than Senior's generation. We should give them the opportunity to express their vision, objectives and strategies in the way they look to a Rotary Club. We have to push to form more "Satellite Rotary Clubs".

RI President Barry Rassin believes that *"we are going to see new ideas coming from Rotaract showing Rotary how important and how equal Rotaract is to Rotary"*.

We shall implement a program and then to be practical through many new ideas that we will implemented as reported in the GML #1 of July 2018 by PP Ralph Sayah and his team.

Why do we state in the District theme that youth **is** our future and not youth **are** our future? Simply because youth means to us, age and spirit. Rotarians have, independently of their ages the volunteering spirit, a joy while serving community etc... we should highlight on what we have in common.

The percentage of the younger generation in District 2452 membership, in term of age, is very far from the global proportion of youth in Rotary in general. To increase this percentage, we will proceed to:

1. Increase the proportion of young people (a program is identified to help bring Rotary's young and senior generation closer together) knowing that we would not be able to reverse the current situation within our District in one Rotary year ... but we can certainly improve it.

2. Instill youthful spirit in senior people so that we can foster common activities among Rotarians of all ages and allow youth involvement in Rotary clubs and with all Rotarians.

3.5- Support the Rotary Foundation, not only by using its programs but by contributing to increase our support financially.

4. Are you planning to introduce any innovative programs/projects/activities?

-New Generations Service Exchange_NGSE is a new program of RI
<https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/new-generations-service-exchange> .

NGSE shall start between Lebanon and Jordan, countries of DG and DGE, then between Jordan and Bahrain etc.

A team of 3 Rotaractors aged 21-25 years old will be exchanged as a beginning between DG and DGE countries as a pilot program for three years with the agreement of three continuous governors starting RY 2018-2019. Guidelines, application form and program are set and this committee is chaired by the DGE 2019-2020 Shawkat Tadros with DGD 2020-2021 Mazen Al Umran ex-officio member.

-Designing a road map for a customizing District Area of Focus_DAOF in "Civic Education and Peacebuilding."

We aim to make civic education for Peace-builders alive. This program has its guidelines for any Club or group of Clubs wishing to get a District Grants or Global Grants in the Areas of Education and Peace and be a winner in the best DAOF project awards. The steps are fully explained by the District chair PE Ghada Ayoub and her team in an annex document to the 1stGML of July 2018.

-Filling the gap between generations into clubs, I have chosen "Youth is our Future" as the theme for our District 2452, along with serial activities Rotary-Rotaract Clubs. I am inviting you to read the program highlights, carefully prepared by District chair PP Ralph Sayah and his team and to implement most of it as to be part of the youth District award. It is an annex document to the GML #1 of July 2018.

-Organizing the 1st New Generation pre-District Conference on 1st of May 2019, previous to the opening ceremony.

-Inspiring RYLA 2019 will focus on “building capacities” with different and innovative approach. Investment in youth doesn't mean we are producing more Rotaract Clubs and Interact clubs but making youth responsible towards their community.

-Six out of nine countries are Arabic speaking and has Arabic language as their official one. Upon my visit to Evanston in July 2018, as RI Representative to UN-ESCWA, we agreed with the staff in charge, that for the 1st time since 1905, the Rotary theme logo will be displayed in Arabic language at the International Assembly 2018. This was done, and emotionally accepted by the D.2451, 2452 and 9010 DGEs who were attending.

The publication #900, RI RY 2018-019 PowerPoint templates and the vision of RI were edited into Arabic language.

More, we aim for a RI website portal in Arabic language. Because we believe that the Rotary public image starts with communication.

What is the plan? **

To translate the publically available pages of the Rotary.org website to Arabic (excluding My Rotary).

Why implement the plan? **

Arab countries population – 407 million (2016)

Arab countries population where Rotary exists - 261 million (D9010, D2451, D2452)

Muslim countries population around the world – 1.8 billion (2015)

90% of Arab/Muslim countries bottom of Global Peace Index

Target communities for projects are Arabic speaking

RCC partners are Arabic speaking

Access vast pool of potential Rotary new members

Project sustainability and maintenance depend on local Arabic speaking communities

PR / PI material and efforts need to be in Arabic

Public stigma about Rotary are published mostly in Arabic (need to correct it)

Most needy region for peace is Arabic speaking

Rotary has adopted Arabic in their motto for the first time [2018-2019] – let us cease the opportunity and build on this.

What is the big picture for this plan? **

Advance Rotary cause for peace and humanity.

Enhance Rotary efforts to serve through projects.

Have access to diverse & young generations.

Encompass history and heritage from ancient civilizations. [Arabic is the language by which the Holy Coran, Muslims holy faith book [Muslims are 1,5 billion as reported by Wikipedia], is written as transmitted to Prophet Mohamed-suh- from God by Archangel Jibril.].

Here is a resolution voted at the 5th DC in Paphos:

3.6- Translation of the Rotary Website into Arabic***

“To welcome the approval by the District Assembly of Incoming Presidents of the proposal of AG 2018-2019 Ahmed Ghazwan of Jordan, to call upon RI to establish an Arabic portal of the

rotary.org website thereby providing all the material and information on website in Arabic, excluding My Rotary and to contact Rotary International to this effect. DGE Michel Jazzar to contact Districts 2451 and 9010 to join forces with District 2452 in this initiative which is aimed at benefiting all Rotarians in Arabic speaking countries."

1. At this point, do you know how much money will be available for district grants in your year?

Almost 50,000\$ [49,999\$] is the amount of the DDF.

20% will be allocated to PolioPlus program: 10,000\$

25% will be used for District projects in relation with the DAOF: 12,500\$

55% will be allocated for GGrants and DGrants in the AOF Education and Peace as a customize DAOF "Civic education and Peacebuilding": 27,500\$

Carrying from previous year the amount may be 120,000\$ that can be used for Global Grants.

The Foundation strategy 2018-2019 for our District was discussed and is to be explained to Rotarians at the "Grants Training Seminar" that will be conducted in all countries by DRFC PDG Jamil Mouawad and/or by Foundation subcommittee chairs, foundation countries chairs and District trainer. A copy of this foundation District strategy shall be sent to all President of Clubs in July 2018.

Speaking about The Rotary Foundation, our strategic plan will cover the following:

-Increase the number of District Grants and Global Grants

-Encourage Clubs to support their Foundation by contributing to the Annual Fund [EREY yearly contributions], to Endowment Fund and to PolioPlus Program.

-The DDF, TRF MOU, District MOU addendum requirements for Clubs.

-Increase our contributions to the Endowment funds to honor PDGs Usama Barghouthi and Mustafa Nasereddin.

- Celebrate the 30th anniversary of GPEI on October 24, 2018.

We are at the heart of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), a partnership of Rotary International, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), and many national governments (MOPH). Rotary has contributed \$1.7 billion to the GPEI through PolioPlus. And it is committed to adding up to \$105 million per year over the next three years through the End Polio Now.

Why our District, even no polio case is declared since almost two decades, should be involved in the "battle" against the polio virus?

Because of the civil wars that prevailed since 2011 in Syria and in Iraq, experts are concerned about the threat of outbreaks in these two countries devastated by fighting, these countries that have boundaries with Jordan and Lebanon with the most important flood of refugees in the 21st century. Flood of refugees also reached Turkey and Europe.

Here, there have been no cases of wild polio virus but there have been cases of vaccine-derived polio virus (VDPV). These are rare strains of poliovirus that have genetically mutated from the strain contained in the oral polio vaccine and transmitted to children who have not been vaccinated. *

Last year in 2017 there were many cases in Syria.

Rebecca Martin, director of the Center for Global Health, at the “US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention” said such outbreaks were rare. She added: “These countries have not seen cases of wild polio virus for many years. These outbreaks of VDPV are due to conflict impacting the ability of health care workers to reach all children with the vaccine.”

According to the GPEI Global Polio Eradication Initiative 10 billion doses of oral polio vaccine were given worldwide between 2000 and 2011 and there were 20 outbreaks of vaccine derived virus, resulting in 580 cases of polio. So no one is safe and we should not put down our hands before the WHO declares that the Polio virus belongs to history.

That’s why our District 2452 is targeting a contribution of at least 100,000 USD. Together we can do it again as we have done it before, when I was the PolioPlus District chair year 2015-2016.

Our promise will be announced during the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the GPEI on October 24th 2018, polio world day. This celebration will take place in Beirut, Lebanon.

A check of 100,000 USD will be remitted at the District 2452 Conference and is matched 2 times by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the amount raised is to be 300,000 USD.

In three Rotary years since 2015-2016 our District would have contributed for almost **one million USD** for PolioPlus.

2. Where and when are you planning to hold the 2019 district conference?

The 6th District 2452 Conference is planned to be from 1st till 4th of May 2019, in Beirut-Lebanon. The opening ceremony will start at 6:00 pm. The venue is Hilton Habtoor Grand Hotel.

During the Conference together we will celebrate the following:

*90th anniversary of Rotary in our region since the formation of the first club in Cairo year 2019, as one of the panels at the 6th District Conference, 1929-2019.

*30th anniversary of women membership in Rotary, during the 6th District 2452 Conference, 1989-2019.

*35th anniversary of the ICCs France-Lebanon and chartering new ICCs during a breakout session, 1984-2019.

The 6th district 2452 conference will be preceded by the “1st New Generations pre-District 2452 Conference” on May 1st 2019, between 9:00 am until 2:00 pm and by the District Training Assembly between 3:00 pm until 4:00 pm voting on budget 2019-2020.

* https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/0/polio-could-wiped-within-year/?adbsc=social_20180518_2355701&adbid=997518026453987328&adbpl=tw&adbpr=17819033

**Courtesy, PP Ahmed Ghazwan presentation “Rotary Inspiration, Reaching Beyond.”

*** Extracts from 5th District 2452 Conference resolutions, page 23.