

AgriCord General Assembly
Seoul, 18th May 2006.

Agenda 8. Communication on the past presidency of AgriCord.

"On behalf of the Board and Management Team of AgriCord, I have a short message for Gerard Doornbos, who is chairing today his last meeting as president of AgriCord. I must admit that I volunteered strongly to deliver this message, and that other members of the Board would have been happy to be in my place. They all wanted to be associated with this.

Thanks first for the boost in credibility you gave us, at the very beginning of AgriCord. You were familiar with Agriterra, and you raised the organized world farmers interest in global issues, in particular in the strengthening of farmers' organisations everywhere in the world. AgriCord has been building on that ambition of Agriterra and of its president.

Thanks also for the effective guidance you gave us, during this critical first period. Your approach made lots of differences workable between agri-agencies, their company cultures, their management styles and their agenda's, hidden or not.

It is not easy to build an alliance. I remember the candid reaction of the late dr. Nakaoka, director of IDACA, the Japanese member of AgriCord, when Gerard and I were proposing, in a DCC meeting in Tokyo, a new alliance of agri-agencies... He was warning us. He said "when you have too many captains on a ship, it will climb the mountain". Within AgriCord, Gerard Doornbos always has kept things as simple as possible, very straightforward, or should I say, very Dutch? The late dr. Nakaoka became a strong supporter of AgriCord.

Two years later, Gerard Doornbos helped us build our working relation with IFAP, when he signed the Memorandum of Understanding with IFAP. This was another important step in the building of AgriCord.

With this two elements, the credibility you allowed us to build, and the effective guidance you gave us, we made progress, and we enjoyed lots of good moments too, during and after work. I made that promise end of 2002, when you were ready to accept to be our first president. I promised that we would deliver in terms of results and in terms of fun. Some results are indeed there, but I must admit that the fun could have been greater.

With that, may I invite the members of AgriCord, and the representatives of farmers' organisations in this room, to join me in thanking Gerard Doornbos, and to give him the round of applause he deserves. Thank you."

Ignace Coussement
Managing Director