

Dear Friends,

it is a matter of great satisfaction and pride for me to extend to all of you the most cordial welcome to the International Radio Medical Center (C.I.R.M.) on the occasion of the 90th anniversary since the beginning of medical assistance activities on behalf of seafarers of all nationalities, sailing all over the world.

For 90 years now, C.I.R.M. has been providing free medical care to all sailors around the world, 24 hours a day and every day of the year. An ingenious intuition of a Sicilian doctor, Professor Guido Guida, supported by Guglielmo Marconi, to care for and support the health of sailors, of all nationalities and sailing the seas and skies around the world. Yesterday through Morse signals and radio, today through the most advanced satellite and network technologies.

It was 8:15 p.m. on April 7, 1935, when C.I.R.M. received, by radio, the first request for assistance from the steamer Perla sailing in the Atlantic Ocean, which, with a marconigram asked for help: *Stoker diagnosed day 2 doctor Dakar Pott's disease prescribed Adrenocalcin stop. Today accusing fever 39 with Eclampsia pulse 77 please advise. Master De Simoni.* After 20 minutes, at 20:35, the first response from C.I.R.M. *Received your marconigram stop. We recommend giving the patient antipyretics such as Aspirin one and a half grams daily in three times stop. If the patient still complains of convulsions administer tranquilizers such as bromides a couple of grams a day or morphine injections stop. In the absence of these medicines administer some opioid sedative such as opium tincture 10 drops every 5 hours discontinue Adrenocalcin stop. Inform us tomorrow morning of patient condition C.I.R.M.* With prescribed treatment, the stoker began to improve over the next night, soon reaching recovery.

We do not know the name of the stoker of the steamer Perla, our patient number 1. The first of 140,570 patients assisted to date between ships and planes. Assistance that has required about a million medical messages sent and received, thousands of air ship rescue operations, constant medical support-from giant oil tankers, to passenger ships, to small fishing boats. A very special kind of care when we consider that most of the time we do not know and, probably, will never know or see our patients, whom we have, in general, treated decisively and whose lives we have saved many times. This in a nutshell is our mission as a long-distance hospital: an Italian excellence, a world top among "sister" facilities in the rest of the Planet.

Today, April 7, 2025, we are gathered in the C.I.R.M. House to celebrate our 90 years of activity, commitment and labor on behalf of thousands of our patients, often forgotten workers, who face the challenges of sea and sky with us every day

On this occasion, I would like to thank those present and those connected by video conference for being with us and participating in our celebration. Thanks, and deferential greetings go to Mr. President of the Republic, Mr. President of the Senate, the Minister of Health and the President of the Lazio Region for the messages that have sent us, and which will be read immediately after this speech of mine. Warm thanks go to the Italian State, which thanks to its annual contribution, a law since 1955, enables, in part, the existence and operation of the C.I.R.M.

A very special thank you goes to Princess Elettra Marconi, who is here with us and will extend her greetings. Without your father, the radio, such an ingenious invention, dear Princess, we could not have been here today to reflect on how this extraordinary technology, which has gradually advanced, has enabled us to treat so many sick people that we define as remote, that is, far from health care facilities and operators. Sick people who without radio, which cancels distances and breaks down boundaries, would not have been cared for. A way, in step with the

times, to carry out the fifth work of corporal mercy: *I was sick, and you visited me*, where the verb to visit should be considered in its broadest sense, to assist, to care. A thank you, believe me Princess, that words cannot express.

Other thanks go to the Italian Coast Guard for their constant support of our work in the rescue missions of people in life threatening conditions. Coast Guard represented by the Commander General Admiral Nicola Carlone, to whom I am grateful for being here with us.

Today's celebratory day consists of two parts: that of this morning, which has just begun, and a conference in the afternoon on technological advances to increasingly improve the quality of medical care in the seas and skies.

At such an important time for us, I would like to express from the bottom of my heart our immense gratitude to the physicians who work daily at C.I.R.M. in caring for our remote patients and to the entire staff, technical, administrative and support personnel who daily contribute to keep functional and efficient a complex machine such as C.I.R.M. Perhaps none of them suspect how great a contribution they make, through their commitment, to the good of humanity. Thanks also to our Benemerites, who constitute the "parliament" of C.I.R.M. and who generously make their professionalism and expertise available to our mission.

Generally, on important anniversaries, we try to coin a sentence that sums up the spirit of the event. I think the beautiful one by Anatole France may be appropriate: *"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream; not only plan but also believe."*

C.I.R.M., despite the many difficulties that have marked its navigation, has acted by assisting sick people on the seas and in the skies, has dreamed to improve the quality of medical care for sailors, and has designed solutions that will be discussed in the afternoon. I believe that, overall, we have done good, and this is the greatest reward for our efforts and labor.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY C.I.R.M.