



January 2014  
President's New Year's Message

*Winds of Change*

Dear SIETAR Colleagues,

As we approach a New Year I would like to share with you what is happening in SIETAR Europa and to invite you to play your part in raising our organisation to a new level of excellence in the intercultural field.

In Europe, as elsewhere, winds of change are blowing and we must unfurl our sails to take advantage of them. This may mean leaving sheltering practices and structures that we have relied on until now, which may no longer serve us well as we sail into the uncharted waters of a global tide of change.

As a step toward more efficient and smarter ways of working, SIETAR Europa will engage an **Executive Officer** in January 2014. This step is designed to ensure that we:

- Strengthen SIETAR Europa's public image and develop a professional brand that people across Europe will recognize and be keen to associate with.
- Create and commit to a vision and implement strategic plans that will grow the organization and establish it internationally as the leader in intercultural education, training and research.
- Increase membership involvement and grow local and national SIETAR organisations that are at the heart of the vitality and sustainability of the entire SIETAR movement.

Taking advantage of the winds of change also means strengthening our **capacity to work virtually**. We will launch a SIETAR Europa virtual meeting platform in January to support the activities of the working committees and the Board of Directors. These **working committees** have targets to meet and results to deliver in the areas of communication and social media, publication and research, grants and projects, membership events, finance and development, as well as planning our next congress in 2015.

**Desire for greater global collaboration** is gathering momentum in conversations between SIETARs in Europe, USA, Japan, Brazil, British Columbia Argentina, Australia, Arabia and Young SIETAR. This surging tide of global networking will lift all the national and local boats in the SIETAR fleet!

SIETAR Europa's immediate critical challenge is to clearly define itself and its **vision towards 2020**. The first in a series of strategic meetings to explore our future directions will be held in February, facilitated by our Finance and Development Committee. Follow-up steps will be taken at the Board meeting in Madrid, March 6-9.

We eagerly view the New Year as an occasion for change, for fresh vision and for new accomplishments. To make the most of these opportunities, we need creative, innovative and energetic minds and willing hands. We need your input. We need you. Please make it your resolve for 2014 to communicate your ideas and needs, to volunteer your available time and energy to your local SIETAR organization, to the work of SIETAR Europa and its Committees. (Committees are listed at <http://www.sietareu.org/what-is-sietar/committees>). We encourage you to participate actively in the discussions in our various SIETAR online networks.

Join us for an exciting and productive year!

Yours,

*Livingstone Thompson, PhD*

President, SIETAR Europa