



7TH HOPE CONGRESS MUNICH 2010

NOVEMBER 3 - 7, 2010

GREETINGS

Eva Luise Köhler

Welcome Address to the HOPE Congress on Education for Children with Medical Conditions
read at the reception in the Residenz Munich on the opening night Nov 3, 2010

Ladies and Gentlemen,

as patron of this congress I would like to welcome each and everyone of you here today, especially also the host of this evening Minister Spaenle, as well as Minister Luksic from Slovenia, the representatives of Ministries of Education, school authorities and private initiatives from throughout Germany and from other countries; the representatives of the 'Förderverein Schule für Kranke München e.V.', the principals of the two schools and the representatives of HOPE.

Why should a sick child learn? - Let me rephrase this question: Why should a child learn? - The answer is not, to learn is a preparation for life, the answer is - as for any human being - to learn is life itself.

That's why every child has a natural right to education. The motto of this congress reflects this: The Sick Child - Supported by a Network of Medicine and Education.

There are many public resolutions which postulate the right to education for every child, which remind us not to exclude children who are disadvantaged or marginalized. For this reason the European Union has declared the year 2010 the 'European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion' and interprets this also as exclusion from educational opportunity.

The group of the potentially marginalized includes the growing number of children and adolescents with chronic or lengthy illnesses, and those who require psychotherapeutic intervention. The teachers assembled here tonight are putting this idea of combating exclusion through education into practice every day.

You - and other professionals - assembled here have travelled to Munich from near and far in order to gain new insights, share experiences and to return home with new ideas.

I wish you all fruitful and enriching days.