

### **38th congress of the International Office in Vienna**

At the moment present the 38th congress of the International Office du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux is taking place in Vienna. It is the 5th congress to be organised in Vienna after 1933, 1955, 1972 and 1994.

At the same time both the 100th jubilee of the Austrian allotment federation and the 90th anniversary of the International Office are celebrated.

Among the numerous honorary guests at the opening ceremony were Mrs Sabine Oberhausen, Austrian minister for health, Mr Léon Wietor, director of the Agricultural Authority (Asta) representing the Luxembourgish minister of Agriculture Fernand Etgen, in whose remit falls the International Office and Mrs Viviane Reding, member of the European Parliament.

The president of the European Commission Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker sent a message of congratulation which you find below.

Updated insights and reports can be found under [www.kongresswien2016.at](http://www.kongresswien2016.at)

**Mr Jean-Claude Juncker**  
**President of the European Commission**

**Message of support for the**  
**International congress of the**  
**Office International du Coin de Terre**  
**et des Jardins Familiaux**

**Vienna, 17-21 August 2016**

I would like to welcome you to this year's international congress of the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux.

This is a special moment in your history. In 1926, you put down roots in a small corner of Europe's garden, in Luxembourg. Today, 90 years later, your branches cover the European continent. Indeed, you have even reached the shores of Japan.

Nature can teach us valuable lessons about life. A garden reveals the value of hard work and the need for patience. Often, our best projects bear fruit not today or tomorrow but only later. Many politicians would do well to reflect on this.

Today, our civilisation needs to repair its relationship with nature. We need to take greater care of our planet, the only one we have. We owe this to our children and to their children. This is why the European Union leads the global response to climate change; why we raise the standards for clean air and clean water; why we protect our wildlife and its habitat. Caring for our planet is like the work of a gardener: it continues through the seasons, and is never complete.

Your organisation has served nature for almost a century. By protecting our gardens, you promote that vital balance between human industry and natural life. You reconcile our towns and cities with the land beneath our feet.

Let me congratulate you on this 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary. From a modest beginning in a small part of Europe, you have grown into a movement of more than two million people. It is a great achievement and I wish you every success.

**Jean-Claude Juncker**  
**President of the European Commission**