



Dear fellow Zontians,

Warm Zonta greetings from my home in Verden, Germany!

How wonderful that you are taking this time to attend your district conference. Whether this is your first conference or you have attended many, district conferences are a wonderful opportunity to meet other Zontians outside your club and to discuss important topics and share ideas about the future of Zonta. I personally also always enjoy the possibility of meeting old friends and making new ones, and I hope that you too find joy.

As you come together with your fellow Zontians, women and girls around the world are facing unprecedented challenges. Conflict and war, climate change, economic hardships and legal and political battles threaten the hard-won gains for gender equity Zontians and others have worked so hard to achieve over the last 100+ years.

However, despite the enormity of the problems we face, I am not discouraged. I still believe our vision for a world where women's rights are recognized as human rights and every woman is able to achieve her full potential is possible. Why am I so hopeful? Because each and every day I hear stories of Zonta clubs and individual Zontians working together to make our Zonta vision a reality in their local communities and around the world. Thank you for inspiring me with every action you take and every story you share!

At the beginning of this biennium, I presented my biennial goals – **Stand Out for Gender Equity**, **Represent Global Citizenship**, **Develop Future Leaders**, **Celebrate Ourselves** and **Position Zonta for the Future**. We have already made good progress on many of these goals. I am encouraged by the number of new clubs in formation and by the active participation in our Zonta Says NO to Violence against Women campaign and new Zonta Says NOW activities across the Zonta world, as well as our new strategic plan. I am excited about the future of Zonta, but there is still more work to do. To ensure our vision for gender equity is a reality, we must work together, and we must strengthen our position by inviting others to join us.

I am looking forward seeing you at the 66th Zonta International Convention in Brisbane, Australia, 27-30 June 2024. It promises to be a fun and exciting experience. Until then, best wishes and thank you for all you give to Zonta, your dedication and determination and your generous donations to our Zonta Foundation for Women - to **BUILD A BETTER WORLD FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS**.

Warm regards,
Ute