

## **EAFT–ELETO Symposium**

### **“National Languages and Terminology in Higher Education, Science & Technology”**

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## **Jan Roukens**

Jan Roukens (Bandung, 1937) grew up in Indonesia. He moved to the Netherlands in 1950 where he obtained a degree in Physics at the Delft Technical University (1961). After military service he worked for several companies and universities: IBM, Leiden University and Philips. From 1973-1981 he managed a company for the computerisation and networking of a dozen hospitals in the Netherlands. During this period he founded the worldwide International Medical Informatics Association and chaired the Medical Information WG of the European Commission (EC). In 1981 he joined the new R&D framework programme of the EC and was involved with the EC strategy to promote the European Language Industry. In the early 90s he launched the EU's Multilingual Information Society programme (Luxembourg, 1995). Since his retirement early 2002 he advises companies and non-profit organisations in the language & terminology fields. He favours the promotion of the diversity of European languages and he is particularly concerned about the trend in universities and in international companies active in Europe, to use English as their common language instead of the country's national languages. In his view this will lead to serious social and cultural tensions in those countries and to the degradation of their languages. With inevitable consequences for the quality in all domains of life.

He is a board member of Dutch-Flemish and European cultural and language associations and member of the European Platform for Multilingualism representing the EAFT.

He lives in Brussels, married having six adult children and a growing number of grandchildren.