

RIA W.J. SCHUTTE
INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR

Ria W.J. Schutte of Doesburg, the Netherlands, was elected to serve a two-year term as an international director of Lions Clubs International at the association's 108th Lions Clubs International Convention in Hong Kong, China, July 3 through July 7, 2026.

Director Schutte is retired after a long career in health care, welfare and child care. She served as CEO of AKROS Amsterdam for 22 years, helping lead the organization toward financial stability. Under her leadership, the organization changed from one large entity into several operating companies, some for-profit and some nonprofit. She previously worked at Slingeland Ziekenhuis in Doetinchem, where she began her career as a nurse, obtained her master's degree in management and later served as assistant to the CEO.

In addition to her Lion activities, she currently serves as chairperson of the Client Council at Slingeland Ziekenhuis.

Director Schutte has been a Lion since 1991. After serving as a key group member, she remained a member of the Isala Doetinchem Lions Club. She has held a number of offices within the association, including club president, zone chairperson, district governor, Guiding Lion, Lions UN Day chairperson, chairperson of the Lions Centennial Committee MD 110, Lions Clubs International Foundation multiple district coordinator and coordinating Lion for several Eastern European countries. She was the first woman to serve as district governor in the Netherlands.

In recognition of her service, Director Schutte has received several District Governor Appreciation Awards and multiple International President's Awards and Certificates of Appreciation. She is also a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow.

Director Schutte's late husband, Past District Governor Frank de Leur, was also a Lion and Melvin Jones Fellow.