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Autor: Gunten, Hans von

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Preface

It is difficult to achieve complete success for both political and technical enterprises.

In 1992 we are witnessing in Europe a number of countries setting up the United States of Europe, and simultaneously a number of countries reconsidering their unity. Some are trying to move into a common house, while others are moving out!

With the date of January 1, 1993 in mind, a number of European engineers are working hard at achieving a masterpiece, which will be the Structural Eurocodes. Many interested parties, especially from non-European countries, view these developments with curiosity, interest and sometimes rather impatiently: there has been so much talk about these Eurocodes, that they even expect us to send them the full set of finalized Eurocodes! The International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering (IABSE) is not that powerful! It is doing its part in disseminating knowledge worldwide, and the Structural Eurocodes do have a significance going well beyond the limits of the European subcontinent. Elaborating on the Structural Eurocodes is a long process, with political implications, and it involves a scientific and engineering work prepared in a democratic way. This takes time!

We are indebted to the Scientific Committee, chaired by Dr. Günter Breitschaft, and to all the engineers who have participated in numerous meetings to prepare this masterpiece. We are extremely thankful to them for being prepared to share with the global structural engineering community their knowledge leading to the Eurocodes. In investing their time and energy with such technical work, they have achieved a remarkable «political» gesture.

This Conference is taking place in Europe, not in Dubrovnik (in the throws of war) but in Davos, a mountain resort in a country where a part of the population still wonders if it belongs to Europe! This has been an unfortunate situation for our colleagues in Croatia and in Yugoslavia, who were the initiators of this Conference. Their enthusiastic involvement was cut short by events out of their control. The Administrative Committee of IABSE decided to carry on the job already started, i.e. at very short notice, an Organizing Committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Prof. Bruno Thürlimann, and the meetings were organized at a new location. As for any IABSE conference, it was absolutely essential to have the full support of the IABSE National Group and we would like to express our thanks and gratitude here to the Swiss Group of IABSE for their considerable help.

We are convinced that this International Conference on Structural Eurocodes is an important contribution to the further development of structural engineering and the well-being of our societies, both in Europe and throughout the whole world.

Zurich, August 1992

Prof. Hans von Gunten
President of IABSE

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