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## **From the President of IABSE**

Tunnels are an attractive and increasingly selected alternative to bridges, particularly in densely populated areas. This is due to environmental and visual advantages, as tunnels allow road and rail traffic to pass underground, out of sight, with unrestricted use of the land above the tunnel alignment. Further, tunnel ramps may be considerably shorter, and therefore more economical, than the equivalent bridge ramps to cross shipping canals, which often require large vertical clearance.

Tunnel construction methods and technology have evolved considerably in recent years, and a variety of methods now are available for economically viable and safe tunnel construction. All these factors make tunnels the preferred solution in many instances.

The aim of the Colloquium is to present the state-of-the-art, to promote further development of tunnel structures and to transfer know-how from major infrastructure projects to smaller ones. The Colloquium will be a forum for discussion of modern tunnel structure technology with respect to design, construction and maintenance, as well as fire protection, ventilation and risk analysis in the decision-making process. IABSE is responding to the increased interest in tunnel structures by organizing this Colloquium.

*Klaus Ostenfeld, President of IABSE*

## **Address by the Chairman of the Swedish Group of IABSE**

In Sweden tunnelling has a long tradition, mainly for water transport in connection with electric power plants at dams. In the early 1990's the interest in tunnel structures increased rapidly in order to reduce the environmental impact of roads and railways. Several road and railway projects have been recently completed, are underway or are planned in Sweden, especially in the vicinity of Stockholm. Therefore the Swedish National Group of IABSE proposed this colloquium on Tunnel Structures in Stockholm in 1998. The Swedish National Group of IABSE has worked with enthusiasm to make this meeting an event of high quality for all who attend.

The fact that Stockholm is the Cultural Capital of Europe in 1998 makes it all the more worth a visit in June 1998. Lastly, it must be noted that an International Conference on Underground Construction focused on rock tunnelling will take place the week after the IABSE Colloquium.

*Hans Ingvarsson, Chairman, Swedish Group of IABSE*