

Opening ceremony of the 14th IABSE congress

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**Opening Ceremony
of the 14th IABSE Congress**

**Cérémonie d'ouverture
du 14e Congrès de l'AIPC**

**Eröffnungszeremonie
des 14. Kongresses der IVBH**

Leere Seite
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Page vide

Welcome Address

Discours de bienvenue

Willkommensansprache

NINAN KOSHI

Chairman, Organising Committee and
Chairman,
Indian National Group of IABSE
NEW DELHI, India

1. Hon'ble Minister for Surface Transport, Mr. Tytler
2. President, IABSE, Prof. Von Gunten
3. Secretary, Ministry of Surface Transport, Mr. Abraham
4. Secretary, Department of Posts, Mr. S.P. Gulati
5. Secretary ING, Mr. S.P. Chakrabarti
6. Distinguished Guests, Delegates to the Congress, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a matter of great privilege and pleasure for me as Chairman of the Indian National Group and of the Organising Committee to extend a hearty welcome to all of you on the occasion of the inauguration of the 14th Congress of the International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering.

It was a great moment for the Indian National Group when its bid to host the 14th Congress of the IABSE was accepted by the Parent Body in 1988. Since then we have been preparing for the Congress and we are extremely happy to see the culmination of our efforts today at this inauguration ceremony which is graced by so many distinguished guests and delegates from India and abroad.

The IABSE is the most reputed international body dealing with multi-disciplinary aspects of structural engineering. The Congress of the IABSE attended by a galaxy of leading luminaries of the bridge and structural engineering profession affords an unique opportunity for exchange of views at the professional level, cross fertilization of ideas and opening of new vistas.

India has a history of excellence in building structures dating back over many thousands of years. The many ancient monuments and edifices which can be seen even today bear witness to this magnificent structural heritage. They exemplify the theme of this Congress which is 'Civilisation through Civil Engineering' or the vital role of structures in the orderly growth of civilisation. I am sure many of our delegates from abroad who may be going on the post-Congress tours will get an opportunity of seeing some of these historic structures as well as some of the more modern structures which signify India's march towards progress and development.

In conclusion I wish to once again welcome and express my thanks to all our distinguished guests and especially to all the delegates who have come from far and wide to enrich and enliven the deliberations of this Congress with their valuable participation. We hope your discussion will be fruitful, that your stay will be comfortable and that you will carry back with you pleasant memories of this Congress, this historic city and this country.

Leere Seite
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Page vide



Inaugural Address.

Discours d'ouverture

Eröffnungsansprache

JAGDISH TYTLER

Honourable Minister of State for Surface Transport
Government of India, New Delhi

Distinguished delegates.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be amongst the eminent bridge and structural engineers of the world who have assembled here for the 14th Congress of the International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering being organised by the Indian National Group of the IABSE under the patronage of Government of India, Ministry of Surface Transport (Roads Wing) and State Governments.

The theme of the congress is **"Civilisation through Civil Engineering"**, which aims at highlighting the all embracing nature of civil engineering in shaping and improving the built environment for the benefit of society. From the primitive society to the present industrial age, it is civil engineering technology which is producing the basic infrastructure for development and growth. It is, therefore, very appropriate that the Fourteenth Congress of the IABSE should focus attention on the close relationship between civilisation and engineering.

As we know the United Nations have proclaimed the nineties as the "International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction" India and many other developing countries are highly prone to natural disasters such as earthquakes, land slides, floods, cyclones and tidal waves which cause immense damage to life and property every year. The recent devastating earthquake which rocked the Uttar Kashi region of northern India comes to mind. I am happy to know that eminent structural engineers will investigate in this Congress various ways and means of mitigating such natural disasters so as to reduce loss of life, damage to property and economic and social disruption.

Environmental pollution, thanks to the rapid pace of industrialisation in the world, is another important issue which is of great concern to humanity. Large scale urbanisation, de-forestation, discharge of industrial effluents in the rivers and indiscriminate use of hydrocarbons are some of the harmful effects of industrialisation which are creating ecological imbalance. It is, therefore, appropriate that the Congress will be examining the environmental impact of civil engineering projects and providing suitable guidelines. It is also heartening to know that special emphasis is being given to large scale technical exploitation of renewable energy like solar energy and the contribution that the civil engineer can make to this cause.

A large and efficient highway network is essential for economic development for which we are all striving. Our transportation needs are growing by leaps and bounds and improved technology and quicker methods of construction are required to meet the demand. Bridge structures form a vital part of any road network and their construction maintenance and upkeep are of great importance in keeping the arteries of communication open. For bridging the very wide Indian rivers, specific solutions with long span structures will be required. Apart from this, there will also be very heavy bridging activity in this country in the years to come. I am sure the bridge engineers of this country will make full use of this opportunity to interact with their counterparts from abroad and bring themselves uptodate with the latest thinking in these areas.

I note with appreciation the fact that one of the sessions of this congress is being devoted in discussing world trends in financing of projects. This is indeed a very topical subject and I am sure all countries whether developed or developing are facing the same problem of finding enough resources to expand and develop their transportation infrastructure. In this regard the need for going in for new and unconventional sources of financing other than that provided by Government is now quite well recognised. I hope the deliberations in this regard will lead to some practical conclusion which can be immediately put to use for successful implementation of projects.



The Indian National Group of the IABSE, ever since it was set up in 1957, has been playing a leading role as a forum for exchange of ideas and dissemination of the latest technical information regarding bridges and structures. It has been one of the most active National Groups of the IABSE and has been extremely successful in holding many international seminars on very important and topical subjects in structural engineering whose published proceedings have become work of reference for structural engineers of the country. The holding of this 14th Congress of the IABSE in India is indeed a feather in the cap of the Indian National Group. I have no doubt that the group will go from strength to strength in its endeavours to serve the engineering profession in this country.

I am told that this is the first time that the Congress of the IABSE is being held in a developing country in Asia. I am sure that the technical discussions of the congress will not only be stimulating and rewarding but would also be extremely beneficial for the bridge and structural engineers of the country.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Indian National Group of IABSE for giving me this opportunity to be here today and share my views with you. I wish you a happy stay in this historic city and success in your deliberations.

With these words, I declare this Congress Open.

Opening Address

Discours d'ouverture

Eröffnungsansprache

Prof. HANS VON GUNTEN

President of IABSE

Président de l'AIPC

Präsident der IVBH

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear colleagues,

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to welcome all of you here in New Delhi on behalf of the International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering.

In the first place, let me address our hosts, our Indian friends who have organized this Congress. It is, for all of us, a most remarkable event that we have the opportunity to gather in your marvellous country. We are impressed by your great hospitality and aware that a number of interesting days lie ahead to which we look forward with anticipation and we are sure that we will always remember them with pleasure. For all this, my dear friends from India, I would like to extend to you my utmost appreciation and heartfelt thanks.

I would like, in particular, to greet the ladies who enlighten through their presence the social programme of the Congress. Accompanying persons are always welcome at our events and without them their charming presence would be really missed.

The identity of the International Association for Bridge and Structural Engineering is dependent not only on the quantity but also on the quality of the participants. The numerous authors of contributions, the session chairmen and the members of the Scientific Committee guarantee the high standard of our Association. We would like to express our most sincere thanks and appreciation.

Associations such as ours are being confronted with some tough gales, with a heavy recession worldwide and increasing unemployment. We are not at a stage where we have to fight for our survival, but serious consideration has to be given to IABSE's future. Many of our members are indeed experiencing great difficulties in paying their membership fees. I appeal to some of our National Groups to initiate sponsorship, for a limited period of time, of collective membership fees. In this day and age, affluent countries could do their share to reduce the North-South gap. Furthermore, the Executive and Administrative Committees are faced with an increasing lack of moral fibre in payment attitude which costs thousands of francs annually to the Association, thus a threat to our own funds. We are quite willing to talk about codes of ethics and to philosophize on these but we should not forget to abide by our declarations.

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,
werte Kolleginnen und Kollegen,

Im Namen der Internationalen Vereinigung für Brückenbau und Hochbau, ist es mir eine grosse Ehre und besondere Freude, Sie alle in Neu Delhi willkommen zu heissen.

Lassen Sie mich bitte zuerst unsere indische Freunde ansprechen, welche diesen Kongress vorbereitet haben: Es ist eine bemerkenswerte Tatsache und eine grosse Chance für uns alle, uns in Ihrem wunderschönen Land zu treffen. Ihre gross Gastfreundschaft beeindruckt uns sehr. Interessante Tage liegen vor uns und wir werden sie mit Freude in Erinnerung behalten. Für all dies möchte ich Ihnen, liebe Freunde aus Indien, gratulieren und herzlichst danken.

Insbesondere möchte ich die Damen begrüßen, die durch Ihre Anwesenheit die Tätigkeiten des Gesellschaftlichen Programms erleuchten. Die Begleitpersonen sind an unseren Veranstaltungen willkommen und wir möchten keinesfalls ihre Anwesenheit und ihren Charme vermissen.



Der Ruf der Internationalen Vereinigung für Brückenbau und Hochbau resultiert aus der Anzahl und der Qualität der Teilnehmer. Die vielen Autoren von den Beiträgen, die Sitzungsvorsitzenden, sowie die Mitglieder des wissenschaftlichen Komitees sorgen für das hohe Niveau unserer Vereinigung. Ich bin Ihnen sehr dankbar.

Ein rauher Wind weht Vereinigungen wie der unseren ins Gesicht. Weltweit stellt sich eine grosse Rezession ein, Arbeitslosigkeit macht sich breit. Nicht dass wir einen Kampf ums Ueberleben fechten, doch müssen wir uns ernsthaft Gedanken zur Zukunft der IVBH machen. Viele unserer Mitglieder haben tatsächlich grosse Mühe, die Mitgliederbeiträge zu entrichten, und ich appelliere an unsere nationalen Gruppen, für solche Länder und Hochschulen zeitlich begrenzte Kollektivmitgliedschaften im Sinne einer Patenschaft zu übernehmen. Dadurch würden die reichen Länder einen sinnvollen Beitrag zur Verminderung des Nord-Süd-Gefälles leisten. Daneben stellen wir im Vorstand und in der Geschäftsleitung eine zunehmende Verwilderung der Zahlungsmoral fest, die unsere Vereinigung jährlich Tausende von Franken kostet und unsere Substanz gefährdet. Wir sind gerne bereit, von hehren ethischen Zielen zu sprechen und darüber zu philosophieren. Vergessen wir aber nicht, von uns selbst auch entsprechende Taten zu verlangen!

Mesdames, Messieurs
Chers collègues,

Au nom de l'Association Internationale des Ponts et Charpentes, j'ai l'honneur et le plaisir de vous souhaiter la bienvenue à la Nouvelle Delhi.

Permettez que je m'adresse d'abord à nos hôtes indiens, organisateurs de ce Congrès. C'est pour nous tous un événement remarquable que de pouvoir se réunir dans votre merveilleux pays. Votre grande hospitalité nous impressionne et nous savons que des jours intéressants s'annoncent à nous. Nous nous préparons à vivre ces journées avec curiosité et nous sommes sûrs que nous en emporterons un souvenir plaisant. Pour toutes ces expériences à venir, chers amis de l'Inde, je désire vous exprimer ma gratitude et mes chaleureux remerciements.

Je désire, en particulier, saluer les dames qui illuminent par leur présence les activités du programme social de Congrès. Les personnes accompagnantes sont les bienvenues à nos manifestations et nous ne voudrions en aucun cas manquer leur présence et leur charme.

L'image de l'Association Internationale des Ponts et Charpentes est le résultant du nombre et de la qualité des participants. Les nombreux auteurs de contributions, les présidents de séance et les membres du Comité Scientifique sont les garants du haut niveau de notre Association. Qu'ils acceptent notre reconnaissance et l'expression de nos sincères remerciements.

Un vent rude souffle à la face d'associations telles que la nôtre. Une grande récession s'installe dans le monde entier, le chômage croît. Nous n'en sommes pas à combattre pour notre survie, mais il y a lieu de nous poser de sérieuses questions pour l'avenir de l'AIPC. De nombreux membres de l'AIPC ont en effet des difficultés considérables à régler leurs cotisations. J'en appelle à certains de nos groupes nationaux, lesquels pourraient parrainer, pour une période limitée, quelques membres collectifs. De cette manière, les pays riches pourraient entreprendre une action utile pour réduire l'écart entre le Nord et le Sud. Nous devons constater, au sein des Comités Exécutif et Administratif, une tendance désastreuse dans le paiement des cotisations qui entraîne chaque année des pertes de milliers de francs et qui diminuent dangereusement les fonds propres de l'Association. Nous sommes volontiers disposés à parler de règles d'éthique et de philosopher sur la question. Mais n'oublions pas de joindre le geste à la parole!