

INTRODUCTION

by Harald Norvik

Chair of the Norwegian Organising Committee

Your Royal Highness, your excellencies, president Mai, ladies and gentlemen.

It is with great pleasure and pride that I address you on behalf of the Norwegian Organising Committee. This is a day of expectations, aspirations, beliefs and determination, all of which have characterised our three years of preparation following the decision in Buenos Aires that Norway should host the 14th World Petroleum Congress. We have embraced the challenge with much enthusiasm and with the desire to make WPC-94 in Norway a significant and memorable event.

It seems obvious to us all that the World Petroleum Congresses offer a unique global forum for diagnosing the health of the international petroleum industry. Such comprehensive health checks are necessary if we are to detect serious defects or deficiencies. Even more importantly, of course, the World Petroleum Congresses give us the opportunity to stake out sensible and responsible courses of action that can secure our industry a suitable role in a world of sustainable growth.

The challenges ahead are obviously monumental, given the present slump affecting the world petroleum industry and the seriousness of environmental concerns on a global scale. At the same time, the world is in critical need of continued economic growth. The sheer size and nature of our industry mean that the way we act, both in the short run and in the medium to long term, will have a significant and lasting impact on the state of the global economy and environment.

My strongest wish for WPC-94 is that we succeed in becoming even more responsible and foresighted managers of the world's remaining petroleum resources. The overall theme of the Congress, as well as the varied and high-quality technical programme, suggest that our chances of success are good. This Congress must take us many critical steps forward if true sustainable growth is to be achieved, a challenge that calls for courage, creativity and a willingness to accept increased responsibility. This is a tall order for

the 14th World Petroleum Congress. But I would not consider it worth defining unless I believed we could accomplish it—together, and in an open dialogue that inspires confidence.

The Norwegian Organising Committee has striven to provide the best possible setting for such a dialogue. Please take advantage of it! We have three and a half days at our disposal. Well spent, this time could make a difference in the future direction of the international petroleum industry.

I am very pleased that so many of our 2000 international guests have decided to participate in one or more of the wide array of additional activities on offer, particularly our technical tours offshore and on land. We are naturally proud to show you how far Norway has come as an international petroleum producer and processor. We are equally keen to receive your considered advice on how to do things even better. In this also lies an invitation from Norway's petroleum-related industry to forge new international ventures and alliances.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Klaus Mai, president of the WPC, and his fellow WPC officers for the highly constructive spirit of cooperation that has characterised preparations for the 14th World Petroleum Congress.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my fellow committee members and all other individuals, companies and institutions in Norway whose help and support has made it possible to stage this important Congress. Our joint and comprehensive preparations have been greatly facilitated by our highly competent and dedicated Congress secretariat, whose members I also hereby thank.

In closing, allow me to express my sincere hope and conviction that this Congress will offer all delegates and visitors a truly rewarding and enjoyable experience. My Organising Committee and Congress secretariat will do our utmost to ensure that you find your participation at WPC-94 a very worthwhile investment.

Thank you for your attention.

