

ADDRESS

Dirk van der Meer

Chair SPC 14

Dear Delegates, speakers, chairman and all those that made this Congress possible, thank you very much.

At the end of the 13th Congress, Pierre Jacquard, my predecessor as chairman of the Scientific Programme Committee, summarised the Congress brilliantly in the 45 minutes allotted to him.

I was highly flattered when the Norwegian Organising Committee asked me whether I could match Mr. Jacquard's performance in 5 to 10 minutes. I had not known that they ranked my capabilities that high. I said I could not, that I needed at least equal time to have a level playing field.

Do not worry however, that at this festive moment, after the speech by Sir Peter Holmes you have to sit and listen to a summary of the Congress you have just been making yourselves. I will keep this address short.

But let me say a few words. This was a good Congress, very well organised by excellent hosts. It will be a great challenge to our friends from the People's Republic of China to match them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the principal purpose of the WPC is to promote the management of the world's petroleum resources for the benefit of mankind. It aims to foster the application of scientific and technological advances and the study of economic, financial and management issues in the petroleum industry. The Congress that we organised was meant to be a forum for discussion and the exchange of knowledge among petroleum scientists, technologists and executives worldwide.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I think that with your help and that of the Norwegian Organising Committee we have succeeded. Let me highlight a few points, mention some key words to characterise this 14th World Petroleum Congress:

1. A world of sustainable Growth—Challenges and Opportunities

2. The Environmental Challenge leading to new products and new processes.
3. The challenge of low oil prices and low margins.
4. The opportunities in areas of high growth and the challenges in stagnating markets.
5. The Impact of political change.
6. The competition for scarce capital.

How did you respond? By stressing **cooperation**. This became a key word in this Congress. Cooperation between all the various players in our industry. In the understanding of mutual interdependence and on the basis of well understood long term self interest.

The response to low oil prices was cost reduction to increase efficiency, reduce risk and increase effectiveness. The keyword here, very fitting for the WPC, was **technology**. Nearly all the speakers mentioned this from Ministers to scientists. The great progress even in these last 3 years was highlighted. In this respect the enormous power of information technology has become very visible. What is more there is still scope for major new developments.

Also in technology, the key word in this Congress became **cooperations**. 'Integrated multidisciplinary projects teams' became a buzz word.

Ladies and Gentlemen, a number of trends became visible. The rapidly growing role of natural gas and partly linked to that the transportation of oil and gas over great distances via complex systems.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me conclude: You have created a well balanced Congress both in scope and content. There was worldwide participation by all sectors of the oil industry.

There were high quality speakers, senior members of: governments, international organisations, companies, scientific institutions, younger/scientific staff. They addressed the key issues of the oil/gas/petrochemical industries. But it is you, our customers, that made the Congress and I thank you very much for that.

It was great fun serving you.

