

Opening address by Mr. Kari Hakuli
CIECA President
at the 44th CIECA Congress, Istanbul, 15 June 2012

Honourable guests, Ladies and gentlemen, Dear colleagues,

Good morning. I am delighted to be here today to give the opening speech at our 44th CIECA Congress. I extend a warm welcome to all participants and in particular to our guest speakers and I hope everyone will find this congress both informative and useful.

For us, CIECA Members, visiting Turkey, land renown over the world for its glorious civilization and culture, holding our congress here is a great pleasure. On behalf of the CIECA Members, I would therefore like to express our deep gratitude to TÜV SÜD TGK for hosting this congress.

Before setting the scene of this congress, allow me to briefly introduce CIECA.

CIECA is the International Commission for Driver Testing. During more than five decades of our existence, CIECA has been continuously reflecting on a wide range of issues that concerned driver testing. Last year, at our Malta Congress, we took a significant step forward in our strategy in order to formally become a more diversified organization, in which the driving test is not considered as an isolated event, but as a part of a larger chain of actions, such as medical examinations and driver education.

CIECA's objectives are to improve driving standards, to contribute to road traffic education, to improve road safety, to protect the environment and to facilitate the mobility of road freight and passenger transport, both private and commercial.

The theme of this year's Congress - 'Modern Technology and the Training and Testing of Road Users' - is based on this new strategy and fits our strategic goals. This Congress also demonstrates that CIECA is building a thematic programme aligned to the work of the European Commission, in particular its recent Road Safety Policy Orientation. The Congress theme is fitting with the EU-policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020, which has the ambitious target of reducing by half the number of fatalities by 2020, by identifying seven key strategic objectives.

One of these objectives focuses on the education and training of road users, because whatever the technical measures in place, the effectiveness of road safety policy depends ultimately on user's behaviour. Another one of these objectives focuses on the promotion of the use of modern technology to increase road safety.

The Congress is also in line with the initiatives of EU White Book published in March 2011. Initiative no. 30 in this publication encourages to "Include eco-driving requirements in the future revisions of the driving licence directive and take steps to accelerate the deployment of ITS applications in support of eco-driving". CIECA is willing to take active part in this work also in the future.

Organizing this congress is in line with CIECA's ambition to be a modern organization that looks into

the future: we want to be in the front line of developments, we should explore the present and future possibilities of this area for us and for driver standards in general.

CIECA is a global organization and we want to follow developments also outside Europe; it is valuable and a pleasure to have a representative from UN (UNECE) in the Congress as one of our keynote speakers to give us an introduction on how technological developments are incorporated into international conventions and regulations.

ITS is a very popular subject in road safety congresses and there are a lot of these congresses all over the world. Today's Congress however has a unique manner on how to address these new technologies.

Today's Congress is the first one that concentrates on ITS and driver standards and how we - driving examiners and instructors - are coping with them. I am sure that the selected topics will provide you with a wealth of information and many opportunities for discussions.

ITS are valuable means that bring solutions and systems to facilitate safer, sustainable and comfortable mobility for all transport users. It is clear that driver assistance, navigation and tracking and tracing systems are extremely useful to promote transport safety and it is necessary to foster their deployment on a wider scale.

However, this modern technology can produce unintended consequences (e.g. lapse of concentration, accidents due to ignorance on how to operate the devices, etc.). Drivers and road users need education and training if they are going to handle effectively all these new technological benefits. The need to increase and improve driving techniques and skills is greater than ever, not only because of the complexity of current traffic systems but also because additional technology can overload drivers and even increase safety risks. There is an urgent need to develop an education and testing strategy based on research and consultation with road safety practitioners and other members of society that should establish future requirements for driver education.

I hope that today's Congress can discuss the practical consequences of the use of ITS in the conduct of a practical driving test and how it can be used during driver training and also after licensing to monitor the drivers performance.

The Congress will be addressed by top level experts who have a particular experience and insight in the matter and we are honoured to have attracted nine of them. We are very keen to listen and debate about their experiences and new ideas.

Dear colleagues, welcome to the 44th CIECA Congress! We trust that your participation will be a rewarding experience, whereby you can exchange professional ideas extensively with colleagues worldwide, get to know new friends, and enjoy your stay in this fantastic city of Istanbul!

I am delighted to be joined in opening this conference by the CEO of TÜV SÜD TGK, Mr. Rifat Pergel. Thank you TÜV SÜD TGK once again for having made this event possible!

Let me hand the floor over to Mr. Rifat Pergel so he can welcome you all to this Congress.

Kari Hakuli,
15 June 2012