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WELCOME FROM THE 2007 CONFERENCE HOST

I am greatly honoured to welcome all of you attending the 14th TIEMS Annual Conference in Trogir and know that, once again, the great part of the world has gathered here to try, in unified front, to fight the common enemy – disaster in all its forms. Different countries have different systems and means for fighting against adversity, some of them rich and some of them not, but we all, through gatherings like this, are trying to share our achievements, knowledge and practical solutions, with the aim of enhancing and improving collective benefit.

Throughout its history, this great world of ours has been faced with many catastrophes and disasters, which has intensified over the past decade. We've been witnessing natural, manmade and social disasters as well as new threats in a form of terrorist attacks or pandemic disease threats. The truth is that we have produced better means for fighting against and dealing with disasters, but it is also important to keep in mind that contemporary society, in spite of all its facilities and achievements, is still vulnerable. In some cases it may prove to be even more vulnerable. For example, in a case when a disaster hits densely populated areas. Recent disasters have sent a message that there is still much work to be done. It is also very important to emphasize that natural disasters have become more frequent and more severe because of the human influence on the environment. These are global problems and we must find global remedies - We must think in terms of the world and the future and act now.

In general, Croatia is investing great efforts to achieve the standards of the modern world and specifically the EU, with the objective of not being among the weakest links in the chain of defence against disasters. The high auspices of the Croatian Government and Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, and Ministry of Internal Affairs confirm this.

The Regional Centre for Assistance and Disaster Relief, as the host of this conference, and at the same time a governmental institution engaged in previously mentioned matters, is hoping that the proceedings of this gathering will indicate new, clearer and more efficient guidelines in finding solutions for predictable and unforeseen adversities in the future.

This year's TIEMS Conference on "Disaster Recovery and Relief: Current and Future Approaches" will address and cover vital issues to be considered through interdisciplinary approach using different methods. I hope that it will result with beneficial solutions, which will help all of us to be more prepared and efficient in dealing with all kinds of disasters.

Every contribution is welcome, every idea worth considering and every solution precious. This Book of Proceedings will surely be a document worth revisiting in time to come for all participants of this conference.

I wish you a pleasant and memorable stay in our country in the following days and I am sure that you will find some time to enjoy the beauty of this exquisite part of our world. I hope that you will keep the warmth of our sun and hospitality of our people in your hearts for a long time.

Ranko Britvić
RCADR Director
and Conference host

FORWARD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SOCIETY

TIEMS has for the past year been continuing its global focus, and the society has made measurable developments towards its goals and will continue with the help of its members and supporters to create stronger links and networks for information sharing on emergency management worldwide.

Our annual conference in Trogir, Croatia is TIEMS 14th annual conference, and it is a pleasure to be in this historic city and beautiful area. The program is the best ever with ninety two presentations from all over the world, and it is with our great pleasure to welcome the Prime Minister of Croatia to open the TIEMS 14th annual conference.

The number of participants is expected to be around two hundred representing around thirty different countries, and demonstrates the international foundation for TIEMS, and that the program is of interest far beyond the authors themselves. The participants and sponsors of the conference are all engaged in these important and far-reaching subjects of emergency management. We feel that open international gatherings like TIEMS, gives an excellent opportunity for exchange of ideas and discussions on ways and means to make the world a safer place. We are confident that this and other events also lead to increased international cooperation in this highly challenging area, which is not limited by borders.

The published papers in the proceedings give a broad international view of emergency management with an international perspective, and with these proceedings TIEMS like to stimulate a continuous ongoing international dialogue and debate on emergency management. Many thanks go to Alan Jones for his excellent job as Chairman of the Paper Review Committee, and all his team in reviewing of the papers for conference. I trust that the presenters at TIEMS 2007 appreciate this quality improvement of the event.

TIEMS is an international, non political and not for profit society, which has limited financial resources. TIEMS 2007 in Croatia would not have been possible in the form it is presented without the financial support and help of TIEMS 2007 participants and sponsors and TIEMS is thankful to all of you for your support.

Boja Ostojic has taken the initiative together with local TIEMS supporters to establish a Croatian Chapter of TIEMS, and many thanks go to her for giving TIEMS a permanent presence in Croatia. Special thanks also go to Giedo Van pellicom and Charles Kelly, who have been instrumental in the planning process and the financing of the conference. Giedo Van Pellicom in cooperation with Ulrich Raape have also, in cooperation with many of TIEMS directors, got the TIEMS web-site back on track after an unfortunate interruption during the most critical phase of the planning process of the conference, and we will be pleased to make full use of our new site in making the proceedings from TIEMS 2007 available from our web-site, www.tiems.org after the conference.

Finally thanks go to RCADR and specifically Ranko Britvic and Stiven Vlislavic and their staff who have supported the conference and formed a local organising committee, preparing all practical details of the arrangement and all social events.

Organising of the conference has been hectic at times, but seeing the fruitful result of the work, is very satisfying, and we hope you will all enjoy the event.

**K. Harald Drager
TIEMS President**

FORWARD TO THE PROCEEDINGS FROM THE EDITOR AND CONFERENCE PROGRAMME CHAIRMAN

Every emergency in every part of the world, however similar to those that have gone before them seem to pose new challenges for the emergency management community. And with each new challenge it is vital, if we are to improve our overall responses to learn the lessons from these events, and ensure measures are put in place to mitigate and if possible prevent these incidents occurring.

This peer-reviewed collection of papers provides a review of many of the emergencies that have faced the world in recent years and also the threats, which we may all face in future such as pandemic flu and climate change. Most importantly however they address developments, which have been made to manage them, and rather than simply expressing heroic tales, provide a forum for critical evaluation of responses and reporting of new approaches to encourage debate and further develop the profession of emergency management.

One key feature, which appears to underpin, perhaps unsurprisingly, many of papers, is the importance of effective information and communication management. This has long been a challenge for those dealing with emergencies, being raised in many post incident reports and inquiries and it is hoped the papers and the presentations will spark debate amongst you all on the best ways to improve this. TIEMS is actively supporting the improvement of communications practices in the field of emergency management through a range of initiatives, which will also be presented during the course of the conference.

The papers as always convey what has become a hallmark of the TIEMS conference over the years, to provide an interchange between theory and practice with papers from practitioners, researchers, industry and policy makers, which we hope will provide the reader with a balanced and objective view.

Considerable steps have been taken to improve the standard of the papers for the conference over the past year, through the implementation of a new and comprehensive review process. This has however only been possible through the significant efforts and support of the review team, to whom I would like to express my thanks, and hope you will all recognise the improvements realised through this process.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the authors who have spent time and effort to share their experiences, and hope you will all benefit from these, and that these proceedings will form a useful reference document to you in future.

Alan Jones
TIEMS Director
Editor