

WELCOME REMARKS

by

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Magnificence, dear Rectors Karbowski and Grobiecki, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

It is my great honour and privilege to have the opportunity to be here with you today at the opening of ICEE 2010 on behalf of the iNEER Board, but also on behalf of VSB-TU Ostrava CZ, which is one of the founding members of ICEE 16 years ago, and which was also the hosting University of ICEE 1999 and iCEER 2004.

Speaking about it, allow me to announce you very sad news. Last week, professor Roubíček, one of the most initiative people in the history of ICEE, former Rector of VSB-TU Ostrava, Member of Parliament and iNEER Chairman, died and it is his funeral today. Please, on his memory, I would like to ask you for 1 minute of silence.

For my university, the TU Gliwice is the nearest neighbour, and both regional economies are very similar, characterised by a large structural transformation of their industries based on coal and metallurgy during past 20 years. Originally it was planned to organize ICEE 2010 in Argentina, but this decision was changed due to consequences of the difficulties of local organisers. In such a situation, it was decided to organize this year's conference here in Gliwice and the iNEER Board is very grateful to our Polish friends that they proposed this solution, because we all remember the great time which we had during the extremely successful conference ICEE 2005 here in Gliwice 5 years ago.

Living in the 21st century, we must emphasize the role of engineering education which is significant for creating new standards of technology and also represents the most important presumption for world's security and prosperity. Future engineers will solve problems enabling sustainable development for future generations in new conditions of the crisis of ecosystems – i.e. global warming, environmental pollution and limited natural resources.

Successful solution of this re-engineering of engineering education is connected with bridging the gap between two worlds – the world of academia and the world of industry. New imperatives only ask for one common world based on the cooperation, knowledge, creativity and innovation. Open innovation model of university/enterprise cooperation based on sound project management and improved intellectual property management reflecting respective interests are necessary.

The fact that the iNEER community amounts to almost 36 000 members testifies to the foresight of the foundation of this international institution as a family of engineering teachers, researchers and students. It is their qualities that represent moving forces of innovation and technological development, and as a consequence decisions about our sustainable commonwealth.

Ideas, which have led to the establishment of the iNEER, are today, in times of global financial and economic crisis, even more necessary.

The main mission of engineers is to transform ideas into reality and find solutions which could help to increase the quality of human life. Engineering education and research plays a key role in the new knowledge economy. Technical universities and colleges concentrate the high human potential of creative young people. Investment into engineering education is a good investment, because young graduates are the best at applying new knowledge and technologies into life. We know that today's society, from the historical point of view, is on the highest level of technology standard, nevertheless a major part of population has a very poor engineering literacy.

Complex real-world problems call for innovative forms of education. On the other hand, solutions to complex problems require creative, flexible and often unusual and approved treatment. There are also additional demands on students and teachers to bridge the gap between university and society and to fulfil the so-called “third role” of university.

Fast changing labour market, increasing competition in the education sector, increasing influence of stakeholders, dynamic development of new technologies connected to frequent changes of curricula, urgency to increase the attractiveness of engineering education – this represents a new reality of the engineering education.

Ladies and gentleman, I am very glad that these topics are included in the program of ICEE 2010, because we can discuss the progress in different countries, culture, tradition and social – economic environment.

Allow me to congratulate the ICEE 2010 Organising Committee on the excellently prepared conference. And I am sure that ICEE 2010 will be a further step in a successful story of an international character of engineering education, research and innovation.