

Welcoming address of the Dean of Civil Engineering for the international conference “Innovations on Bridges and Soil-Bridge Interaction”

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the School of Civil Engineering of the National Technical University of Athens I congratulate the organizers of this important event and I welcome you, particularly the participants from other countries, in the conference.

The School of Civil Engineering is the oldest School of Engineers of the Modern Greek state. We are proud of its history and of the historical role it has played in the development of our country. We are proud of our students and graduates (I noticed some of them in this audience) who have contributed in engineering, technology and research not only in Greece but all-over the world. We are delighted for the current state of our School, which according to the QS organization, ranks #7 among the European Civil Engineering Schools and #1 according to the criterion related to the recognition of our research work, namely the rate of citations to our publications.

This International Conference is organized by the “Hellenic Society of Bridges Study” (HSBS), a non-profit scientific association with members from all around Greece, whose purpose is the promotion of the theoretical and applied research on the design and construction of Bridge Structures and Soil-Bridge Interaction. Founding members of this Society are retired professors, yet very active in research, or current staff members of our School.

Bridges are important constructions, highly appreciated not only by engineers but also by the general public for their utility and their aesthetic value. In addition, the notion of a bridge is a very positive one in the public consciousness. The high symbolic content of a bridge is illustrated, for example, by these words of the bishop and writer T. D. Jakes:

I like to see myself as a bridge builder, that is me building bridges between people, between races, between cultures, between politics, trying to find common ground.

Dear participants,

I now have the pleasure and honour to pronounce the Second International Conference on “Innovations on Bridges and Soil-Bridge Interaction” (IBSBI 2014) open and I wish you a great success.

Demetris Koutsoyiannis

Dean of the School of Civil Engineering, National Technical University of Athens