PROCLAMATION

Dear European Community of Civil Engineers,

Dear Colleagues,

Civil engineering belongs to the oldest domains of the human activity – its history is as long as history of civilization. The social role of civil engineering in the development of mankind has been always of fundamental meaning because – synthetically expressing the problem – the standard of the human life highly depends on the level of it. This can be observed from the beginning of human history up to the contemporaries. The constant growth of the role of civil engineering in the future can be also expected confidently.

Civil engineering as the domain of the technological activity is a very important element of the national and international economy. Progress in economy is nowadays impossible without adequately developed building and transport infrastructure.

Contemporary achievements of civil engineering, thanks also to the progress of building knowledge and science, are very spectacular. This can be demonstrated by the numerous tall buildings, dams, large bridge structures, motorways, sport stadiums and halls, theater houses, etc., constructed in the last decades which strongly influence the urban and extra-urban areas and landscapes. On the other hand, however, it is necessary to indicate less spectacular but very important for social and economic reasons fields of civil engineering, such as residential buildings, small bridges, roads, industrial buildings, etc. The first field can be considered as extraordinary domain of civil engineering, illustrating its especially high level, while the second one can be named ‘the everyday work’ of civil engineers. Both of them are equally important.

The social, economic and cultural progress in every country is impossible without activity of civil engineers, based on their education, professional knowledge and experience. The effects of their activity can be evidently observed in the form of buildings and structures of various types. They are in general socially accepted or even admired. However, the role of civil engineers is in many cases not enough appreciated by social community compared to some other professions, such as e.g., lawyers, medical doctors, economists or artists as well as – within technical professions - architects, electronic engineers, computer scientists, nanotechnologists. In spite of its dynamic development and modern considerable achievements, civil engineering is commonly treated as rather traditional domain of technology. The above situation can be observed in many countries including the European ones. In reality, the role of civil engineers in the social, economic and cultural progress is especially high. Moreover, civil engineering is a profession of the public trust. It means that civil engineers are highly responsible for safety utilization of any buildings and structures. This is a particularly important factor of the social role of civil engineers who, therefore, should show in their activity especially high professional ethics.

Apart from ‘the pure’ technological activity, civil engineers are at the same time obliged to estimate the social effects of their decisions. To meet this condition, civil engineers should widen their knowledge also in the fields of the economic and social sciences. This is a new trend in the so called highly developed countries.

It should be emphasized that one of the most important official documents created recently, namely Madrid Declaration, signed in March 2016 by the representatives of the World and European engineering organizations is in accordance with the above presented social role of civil engineers. The Declaration defines the fundamental challenges faced now by the inhabitants of the Earth in the context of the desire to provide them with social and economic sustainable development. These challenges include among others: prudent management of global natural resources, climate change, the unstoppable process of urbanization, and the growth of the world population. This document also points out the responsibility of civil engineers toward the society for the creation of a sustainable world, and the welfare of its inhabitants. What is more, this is especially important for our engineering community in a situation where 7 out of 17 Strategic Goals of the UN Agenda 2030 is deeply and directly linked to the activities of civil engineers.

Taking into account the situation briefly presented above, the European Council of Civil Engineers (ECCE) has decided to proclaim year 2018 as the European Year of Civil Engineers (2018 EYCE). The main goal of this proclamation is to pay the social attention to the fundamental role of civil engineers in the progress of the standards of the human life as well as to raise their prestige in the society in the European countries.

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the 2018 EYCE

Acting President of ECCE

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