

UNITY CREATES STRENGTH

Martin Marmy

IRU Secretary General

2ND IRU INTERNATIONAL TAXI FORUM, COLOGNE

7 November 2008

Dear President, Dear Guests, Dear Speakers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, on behalf of the IRU President, Mr Janusz Lacny, our 180 Members in 72 countries around the world and myself, to congratulate the organisers, namely Mr Peter Zander, President of the Europäische Taximesse, and Mr Thomas Grätz, Vice-president of the IRU Taxi Group, for this extremely successful event, which has assembled taxi businesses and regulators from four continents.

I am particularly impressed both by the quality of the exchange of experience and by the professional approach of all the interventions during the debate. As such, despite the fact that this Forum is only in its second edition, it has shown that it deserves its own place in showing the way of progress for the taxi industry. For all these reasons, I am particularly proud that the IRU is fully associated with this event.

I can also assure you that the IRU is ready to reinforce even further its cooperation with our Member Association, BZP, and with all the IRU taxi Members to make sure that this Forum becomes the leading global event of the taxi industry.

I am also particularly satisfied that the IRU Taxi Group has selected "quality of service" as the main topic of today's discussion. This shows that the taxi industry, here, but also in the work of the IRU, is ready and willing to lead the debate on this key issue, not alone, but in a true partnership with governments and also with local authorities.

We should recognise that governments and local authorities have a major stake in ensuring a business-friendly environment for taxi companies, in order to allow each of them to continuously provide the quality of services requested by their customers.

A lot has been said today about government and industry initiatives to ensure quality. The IRU itself is also committed to promote the highest professional standards, notably by appropriate lobbying or by the development, if so requested, of an appropriate vocational training for taxi operators and drivers, which could be provided through the IRU Academy.

As you know, the IRU alone can do just a little. However, by enlarging the geographical scope of IRU Members, as proposed by Mr Vorobiev, by working all together in a coordinated manner under the IRU flag, much more could be reached. In fact, I am convinced that the IRU is the ideal global platform for the taxi industry, regulators and all those with a stake in the taxi business to define common positions and to exchange the various Members' experience, to allow them to transform into a success story all the new challenges faced by the profession.

To do so, to be able to provide an effective lobbying with competent authorities, we must unite our forces, we need to work together within the IRU Taxi Group.

Unity creates strength. This is why, with the IRU President, Mr Lacny, with the President of the Taxi Group, Mr Andela, and all the members of the Taxi Group, we would sincerely welcome all those taxi associations who decide to join the IRU Taxi Group, to share this common objective.

I thank you very much for your attention.

