

Madame Chairman, it is my honor to officially welcome so many distinguished guest speakers to this important seminar on International Tourism and Road Safety. I am especially impressed by the global nature of this seminar, with representatives from businesses and governmental agencies all over the world. I look forward to the presentations and to the discussion afterward.

I bring you greetings from both the FIA and from FIA's Region I. In the context of this seminar, and the FIA Foundation study on which it is based, there are many implications for Region I of the FIA.

Region I comprises all of Europe -- including Russia -- the Middle East and Africa. There are FIA clubs in many countries of this Region and -- as you can imagine -- like the differences in the countries, there are significant differences in the clubs. Many of the Western European clubs are very developed and established. Clubs in Central and Eastern Europe are developing and growing

every year and becoming very active in roadway and vehicle safety initiatives. Clubs in the Middle East are branching out into becoming more politically active on issues like safety and environmentally sustainable mobility. And African clubs, particularly in the sub-Saharan region, are creatively looking for ways to provide classic motoring club services to their members and working to improve the safety on their roads. And all of the clubs in Region I are very interested in tourism – both in arranging successful travel for their members and in supporting their countries' economies by helping to build a successful travel and tourism infrastructure.

So, as you can see, this Seminar is of great interest to the FIA Clubs in Region I. And Region I is really a microcosm of the entire FIA family. There are FIA Clubs all over the world – in South America, in Asia and the Pacific, in North America. All FIA Clubs are interested in serving their members, including providing excellent travel service to their members by ensuring

they have a successful trip abroad. And this includes trying to help ensure their members can drive safely and securely when they visit other countries of the world.

On behalf of FIA and Region I, I wish to thank the FIA Foundation for this very interesting and timely study, and I hope that what we learn today will provide some guidance for concrete steps all of us may be able to take to create a safer traveling environment for global tourists.