



## WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD BRIDGE FEDERATION

Mr. Lucijan Vukelić, Representative of the President of the Republic of Croatia; Mr. Goran Petrc, Representative of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County; Mrs. Marina Gašparić, Deputy Mayor, City of Opatija; Mr. Jurica Carić, President of the Croatian Bridge Federation; Mr. Góran Grgurić, President of the Opatija Bridge Association; Mr. Ata Aydin, Chairman of the WBF Youth Committee; Mrs. Sevinç Atay, Chairman of the WBF Kids Committee Federation, authorities, dear friends, dear young players, good evening and welcome to the Opening Ceremony of the 4th World Youth Open Bridge Championships.

First of all, I want to thank my dear friends Ivo Dujmić, Mayor of Opatija, Jurica Carić, President of the Croatian Federation, and Góran Grgurić, President of the Opatija Association and “deus ex machina” of the organisation of this event, for having again given us the opportunity to hold our championship in this marvellous land.

I am sure that this will be a great event thanks to the Local Organising Committee and particularly Branka Grgurić, who has worked with such commitment, passion, professionalism and enthusiasm towards its success. We must also not forget all of our sponsor-friends and the Milenij Hoteli Company, led by Vedran Gržetić, for their generous support.

Finally, I am pleased to mention the excellent job done by both the WBF Youth and Kids Committees, respectively chaired by my dear friends and colleagues, Ata Aydin and Sevinç Atay, who deserve the success that this event will no doubt achieve.

I am sure that, once again, this marvellous city of Opatija will live up to its reputation, tradition, history and culture by offering a great welcome to all of you, dear friends, young players, officers, journalists and guests.

Together with my colleagues from the World Bridge Federation, I am confident in being able to count on the dedication and professionalism of our staff, and on the cooperation of all of you.

I always repeat that bridge is more than fair play – it is a way of thinking and not just a way of being, and I am sure that this event will increase my conviction.

This championship will renew once again our great tradition of friendship, solidarity, aggregation, without discrimination and barriers, exalting the true values of Sport in general, and Bridge in particular. Our motto ‘Bridge for Peace’, which is our flag, has to continue to fly stronger and still higher.

I will never tire of repeating that without the youth, there is no future for our beloved discipline, and today, looking at you, the participants in this championship, we are particularly proud and pleased.

Now, dear young friends, we hand over the stage to you to enjoy the Championships and, of course, your stay in Opatija.

I declare officially open the 4th World Youth Open Bridge Championships.

Un abbraccio to you all.

Gianarrigo Rona  
WBF President