Chers collègues,

Merci pour la confiance que vous me faites en m’élkisant Président de l’AAI pour l’année 2005.

Devenir Président de l’AAI c’est certainement un honneur exceptionnel. L’honneur qui donne le devoir et le plaisir de représenter notre profession à l’échelle mondiale dans un monde qui change vite et, par conséquent, notre profession aussi.

Il y a toujours eu des moments significatifs dans la vie de chaque profession, mais je suis certain qu’après tout ce qui c’est passé, surtout chez nos collègues anglosaxons, nous aurons des répercussions, non pas seulement au Royaume-Uni, mais un peu partout dans le monde. Nous avons eu aussi l’honneur de recevoir Sir Derek Morris avec sa collègue pour démontrer comment notre profession coopère et fonctionne dans d’autres pays et associations membres de l’AAI.

Je trouve que ça démontre la force et la confiance d’une association de professionnels, c’est-à-dire de l’ambition que nous les actuaires avons en continuant de servir nos clients et employeurs, et autres, du mieux possible en donnant les meilleurs conseils en matières de notre compétence.

Four years ago, when Catherine Prime mentioned to me that I was on the short list of prospective future Presidents of the IAA, I was very astonished. I must admit also somewhat flattered, but then I forgot about the matter and it was in Cancun that I was more formally approached and asked if I was willing to be a candidate for the Presidency of the IAA.

To be elected the President of the world association of your chosen profession is, of course, something very special and I must admit that to me an even more special occasion.

Some of you might know that I am a fourth generation actuary. My great-grandfather Axel S Guldberg and my grandfather Alf Guldberg were both founding members and Presidents of the Norwegian Society of Actuaries, which recently celebrated its Centenary. My father, Sven Guldberg, was a very active member until he died some 7 years ago, a member of both the Norwegian and the Swedish Societies of Actuaries.

As we have seen once more during these meetings here in Washington, our profession is a very active one.

The actuarial profession is a very small one if you count heads compared to many other professions, but at the same time we have a key role to play within our areas of activities. This key role gives us a responsibility to act in a professional way and at the same time we must be aware that if something happens that should not happen, we risk being a target to blame. Recent events in some countries have put the actuarial profession in the spotlight. What is the role and responsibility of the actuary? Now we must not forget that we are not the only profession who is under fire so to say.
To me the attitude member associations and the IAA have taken, the great willingness to discuss and improve procedures in many areas, including education, is to be adapted better to address future challenges.

I think that it is the only way we as a profession will continue to have the great esteem we have had for many years.

The visit by Sir Derek Morris and his colleague to our meetings is to me an indication of the interest and also the respect for us as a profession that we will find solutions that will be acceptable both to the general public, our employers and others, and not the least to ourselves, that we as a profession will be able to continue to maintain a high level of expertise and integrity.

On a quite different matter, the IAA has been an organization of national actuarial associations for a number of years. As many of you might remember, we were previously an organization of individual actuaries from all over the world.

The fathers of the present IAA organization achieved excellent work, especially when you take into consideration the doubt and hesitancy many members and associations showed when the result of their work was discussed.

But every organization needs to be reviewed now and then, and thus the strategic task force was set up to discuss how to improve the working of the IAA.

I have had the honour to be part of this work and I am very impressed by the amount of work and intelligence put into this. I think that the result is something that will be very helpful for the IAA to continue to be a worldwide organization, to assist national organizations to continue their work and, not the least, to promote and develop the actuarial profession in new parts of the world and new areas of practice.

Recently the concept of Enterprise Risk Managers has become very popular and might be perceived as a competition or even a threat to the actuarial profession.

We are members of a profession that goes back to at least the first half of the 19th century in organized form. Our predecessors managed to develop the actuarial profession to meet new professional challenges and to face new demands in areas where our expertise and skills were demanded and regarded necessary to solve problems. I think that the challenge is now for us to find ways to introduce the actuarial way of analyzing problems to the Risk Managers and show them that they have only to benefit from cooperation.

During the Stockholm meetings last June, our Financial Risks Committee formed a Task Force to analyze and to recommend a way forward for our profession. The task force has now reported back and I am very confident that the proposed actions will make it possible for the actuarial profession to take a leading role or at least a very important role in the development of this new speciality.

A big international organization built almost exclusively on voluntary work as the IAA is the fruit of many dedicated persons’ work and will only function if enough people give time and more time.
Key persons in the IAA are the committee chairpersons and I will take this opportunity to thank you very much for all the work you are doing for the IAA. I am of course looking forward to a year of close cooperation with all of you.

In this connection I must add that I miss very much that we no longer have Catherine Prime with us. She was such a wonderful person to work with and it was a big loss, not only for our profession, but also personally to many of us when she passed away, much too early, this year.

Once more a great thank you for the confidence you have given me in electing me President of the IAA for 2005.

I will do my utmost to do a good job. I know that with the good support of my predecessor Luis Huerta, new President-Elect Jean-Louis Massé, the Secretary General, Yves Guérard, and the Secretariat most ably led by Nicole Séguin together with Christian Levac and Katy Martin, I will have every chance to continue the successful work done by my predecessors.

Thank You et Merci pour votre attention.

Alf Guldberg, President-Elect