



40 YEARS

Dear members, dear guests,

40 years WFSGI!

It is a great pleasure and tremendous honour for me to lead the WFSGI through its 40th anniversary. 40 years of existence mean that there is a real need for associations like ours and I wish to thank our members for their support and trust in the work that we deliver for the industry.

Let me also thank my predecessors for paving the road to the success we enjoy today. Both Pierre Ryser (RIP) and André Gorgemans have been remarkable leaders who dealt actively with the problems of their periods. 10 years ago, I was hired as the third Secretary General and last year you increased your trust in me by giving me the title of President and CEO.

Since my start, I had the honour to enjoy your full support, which led to a continued growth until today. The growth and increase is shown in membership, services and activities. Also our operational team grew to 17 people (inside and outside) to deliver the day to day business and services of the WFSGI and I thank every one of them for their hard work.

A short glance back on the year 2017. We had an intense year and many new developments caused different waves in our industry. The challenges around manufacturing, such as shorter lead times, close to market, flexible productions

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or retail that saw increasing pressure from major e-tailors, their increasing need for own e-commerce platforms and the changing retail service offers. Also the developments around digitalisation are taking a direct influence on our lives and we are not 100 per cent certain where this road is leading us. These are exciting moments, and as the changes come very fast we need to focus to succeed. New in 2017 was our World Cycling Forum, held in Portugal. The event was a big success and a second edition is planned for March/ April 2019. In addition, we have defined the details of collaboration between the WFSGI and IOC and we are moving forward on the first activities. One of them is the NOC Support Programme in PyeongChang 2018 and we already wish to thank the supporting brands for their generous contributions to the programme.

Please allow me to finish by thanking all the people who have been contributing to the success of the last 40 years. Starting from the late Mr. Armin Dassler (1978) as the first Chairman of the General Assembly and Chairman of the "Committee of Nine" to Sean O'Hollaren (2018) as acting WFSGI Chairman of the Board, but also to all the Board and Committee Members who have invested many hours of hard work for the benefit of our industry. I especially wish to thank the current WFSGI Board, Committee Chairpersons, Committee Members and all the people who are today continuously driving the Federation and the industry forward. I wish our members a happy 40-year anniversary, good health and prosperity for 2018. We look forward to seeing you at one of our next WFSGI meetings.

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