

## Address by Emil Dreyer, Secretary General of FIAV

*Your Excellency, Chairman of SAVA, delegates, guests, ladies and gentlemen: It is the first time in the history of FIAV that a FIAV congress opens without the FIAV President. As you know, I am the Secretary-General and I have the sad duty officially to announce what everybody here already knows: Dr William Crampton, FIAV President, Director of the Flag Institute, world renowned author of vexillological books, Vexillon award winner in 1991, a world vexillological authority and a highly esteemed colleague and beloved friend to so many of us, passed away on 4 June, 1997.*

*His unexpected, premature death at the age of only 61 was due to a stroke in the course of his severe heart illness. He would not let anybody know about his dwindling forces, and continued with his vexillological work; flags were his life. FIAV will best honour him by just continuing with work too, so this evening the general assembly will first elect a new president and then business will continue as usual.*

*Before going on, though, we want to pay tribute to our late president and to the man William Crampton - please stand up for a minute of silence. Thank you.*

*FIAV is proud to be in South Africa for the first time since the Federation was established in 1967. This congress is a symbol of the world-wide success of vexillology and of its organisational body, FIAV, which has spread from Europe to North America, then Australia, Asia, South America, the Pacific, and now with Africa it reaches all the inhabited continents of the planet.*

*FIAV thanks the government of the Republic of South Africa, the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, and the local authorities for their assistance, their support and their warm welcome. FIAV thanks its member, the Southern African Vexillological Association, and all who contributed with their effort to the successful organisation of this congress, for inviting us to this beautiful country. FIAV is proud of its member SAVA for the work it is doing on South Africa's flags.*

*SAVA members were strongly involved in the adoption of the new South African national flag, and as a matter of fact everybody knows that SAVA Vice-Chairman Frederick Brownell was the man who designed it. This is extraordinary, as no other FIAV member organisation has had such an influence on their respective country's flag. The South African national flag is not only beautiful, but perfect too - its design and colours representing the past and the present of the country, two cultures uniting and pointing towards a common future.*

*The South African flag is proof that flags do not only identify and separate cultures, nations or ideals; they also unite them. Flags unite all of us here, people from different, far away countries, different religions and different ways of life, to pursue a common goal — vexillology, the scientific approach to flags. So, let us start working. Thank you.*