This special issue of our new Italian Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene gathers the most prestigious names and high level scientific contributions. We can not express our satisfaction in presenting this result: it rewards the hard work of all our scientific community.

It was about 2006 when AIDII Board decided to propose to IOHA to organize the 2010 International Conference in Rome and now we are here to discuss on the occupational hygiene in the future. The way of working in the next years may not resemble work as we currently see. There have been and will be changes in workplace hazards due to new technologies, aging work force, temporary job, multi-ethnic workers, hazard communication: all topics that need of new approaches and answers.

The occupational/industrial hygiene is now facing many challenges that need of professionals all around the world. To win these challenges IOHA and all the National Associations must spread and promote the discipline in young peoples as a stimulating and rewarding profession; at the same time there is the need to make the Institutions and Employers understood of the contributions that we can give to the prevention of workers’ diseases with social and economic benefits.

IOHA has already worked out and promoted many initiatives to reach these aims, and others will be developed in the near future; many of these will be presented and discussed in specific workshops or presentations during the Conference. We hope this will contribute to let us understand the new challenges of the occupational/industrial hygiene worldwide and suggest the way to win in the “old” as in the developing Countries to avoid the latter the mistakes made in the past by the former.

Papers published are selected amongst the most relevant contributions produced for the 8th IOHA International Scientific Conference, organised by AIDII and by INAIL and ISPESL, the two Italian institutions responsible for prevention and insurance of professional risks. This event is generating a strong interest. In particular, we are deeply honoured to publish the 11 keynote lectures, that represent the thread of the scientific development of ROMA 2010. I would like to underline the high scientific level in terms of quality and quantity promoted by the Conference. Out of more than 650 scientific contributions received, a total of 634 was accepted: 408 were allocated as oral presentation in special workshops (143) and in other parallel sessions (265), while 226 were assigned as poster presentation.

Both traditional issues of occupational/industrial hygiene and new “frontier topics” always accounting for and emphasizing innovation and integration of competences are addressed by the Congress. From risk assessment, indoor air quality, asbestos and silica, chemicals and physical agents, to control banding and nanotechnologies, occupational hygiene certification systems, sustainable development and environmental hygiene. As I said, this edition gathers keynote lectures to show the current situation worldwide on the most critical and significant issues related to health, work and social responsibility. Representatives of the most relevant Institutions worldwide express their different but integrated points of view with one common objective: analysing common needs and priorities and identifying the new strategies for researchers and professionals. For us, celebrating this major forum in the development of occupational/industrial hygiene in Italy represents a big challenge but, at the same time, an excellent opportunity to exchange knowledge and know-how with a panel of experts coming from around 50 different Countries worldwide. ROMA 2010 is a chance for us and for all members of the occupational hygiene community and this edition of the Journal is the representation of the high quality work completed and of the results already achieved in terms of promotion. The quality of this publication and of all contents related to the IOHA 2010 activities must be attributed to the extraordinary efforts made by Editorial Committee chaired by Dr. Andreini and by the Scientific Committee chaired by Professor Bartolucci. I hope that this Conference can give a new life blood to the Occupational and Health and Safety sector in Italy and worldwide. I would like to conclude by inviting all of you to participate actively to the development of this new Journal. Wishing to share with all the readers the success of this scientific activity and to gather the future addresses for the development of our profession.

Have a nice reading

DANIELO COTTICA
Past President of IOHA

MICHELE CASCIANI
President of AIDII