



WELCOME – Alan SMITH, CEPIC President

ALAN SMITH : This is the opening session of the 14th CEPIC congress now. Here we are in the middle of the incomparable art of Florence. Everybody from Italy of course knows all about this art, but perhaps a lot of our visitors don't. And it is perhaps the greatest collection of art in the world in any one place. Florence itself is art, it's a living museum. And it's natural that CEPIC should have chosen it for a congress, because we like to bring our members to places where we can see the visual riches. Imagery as we know it today, was invented in Florence, in the Renaissance under the Medici.

Here some of the earliest work with cameras was done by Leonardo da Vinci. Italy today is still a very visual world of painters and paparazzi. And those of us in our business welcome the two-way traffic between sending our material to Italy, where the appetite is inexhaustible, and getting the visual material out of Italy. Thus, we've called this session 'The Passport to Italy', but it could also equally be called 'The Passport out of Italy', because it is a two-way traffic. Italy invented the image, the statue of David, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the canals and bridges of Venice, the fountains of Rome, the Primavera, the donkeys wearing straw hats, snapshots taken from passing Vespas are all things we have in our minds when you say 'Italy'.

The Italians themselves are hungry to see images of the rest of the world, because their short-deadline colour presses need to be fed with our own images. It's a vibrant, competitive press of magazines, coffee table books and encyclopaedias printing and publishing from here in many languages. To feed this appetite there are many Italian agencies attending this congress and they are listed on this 'Passport to Italy', a copy of which you should all have.

We welcome today Pino and Peggy Granata from Granataimages, Pino has been bravely over the last year saying what many of our heart-of-hearts want to hear, we have Ada Mascheroni and Antonio Scuderi of the famous Agostini firm, the editorial side, who are known worldwide with their works, Alessandra Biagianti of Alinari Archives, and who has not heard of Alinari, and Paolo Baldriga of ANSA Press Agency from Italy, who has got a fascinating subject to talk about, much of which will be new to many of us, on the mobile 'phone photo market in Italy, so I would like to hand over to – I'm not sure who is going to start, who is going to start? You're going to start, Peggy, right then, if you would start, thank you.

