

*The forces of nature
inspire creativity in us all*

*A welcome
by the President of Iceland
Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson*

The account in the opening of the Old Testament of how God created the Earth in six days and then decided to rest because the work was finished is not entirely true. When it came to the creation of Iceland the Almighty became so fascinated by the possibilities that the creation has continued in our country until this very day: with new volcanoes, new islands, new lava fields, new geysers, earthquakes and other spectacles provided by this never-ending show.

The forces of nature have indeed inspired us all and given us the daring to strive for excellence in many fields, to prove to the world that it is possible, even in testing surroundings, to achieve the impossible.

Many people have wondered how a nation which for centuries was the poorest in Europe has in modern times developed one of the most advanced societies in the world, a progressive welfare system and excellent healthcare for all.

The global vision of our medical profession and their outstanding training both in Iceland and all over the world have constituted an important pillar of this success. Cooperation and dialogue with others in the profession, from near and far, have been a critical ingredient. Our continuous success depends on contributions from international health partnerships.

It is in this spirit that I welcome you to Iceland and I assure you that you will be guaranteed a uniquely rewarding experience.