



**A Message  
from  
the President of Iceland  
Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson**

Stamp collections from the Nordic countries bear witness to the kinship between our nations, our history and culture; they commemorate important events and prominent people and stand as an ode to our natural heritage and the life of our societies.

These collections show us how the self-image of people in the Nordic countries has evolved in the course of time, reflecting the changing times through which we have lived.

It is therefore fitting to welcome the NORDIA 2009 exhibition to Hafnarfjörður, a town that recently celebrated its two-hundredth anniversary. At the beginning of the last century, Hafnarfjörður was a poor village whose inhabitants made their living from catching, salting and drying fish. Today it is a thriving and many-sided community with an international atmosphere. Its development has been like a miniature version of that of the whole country.

In their way, the stamp collections also show us the history of our nations in miniature and reflect the changes in the world around us. For this reason it is always instructive and enjoyable to visit exhibitions that bring us the cream of the world of philately. I am sure this will be the case when NORDIA 2009 opens in Hafnarfjörður.