On behalf of the more than 600 members of ASCLD, I would like to congratulate ENFSI, the Institute of Criminalistics Prague, and the Organizing Committee on preparing a tremendous agenda for this week’s activities. It is an honor to be here before you today and I would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer Opening Remarks.

ASCLD’s mission is ‘Excellence through leadership in Forensic Science Management’ and the importance of leadership in forensic science has never been more evident than in today’s crime labs where we are pushing boundaries and we are striving to work beyond our borders.

An important partner in achieving these goals is the International Forensic Strategic Alliance or IFSA. IFSA’s members comprise 6 regional networks including ASCLD, ENFSI, SMANZFL, AICEF, AFSN, and SARFS. On behalf of our member organizations, I’m happy to announce that the new website for IFSA has been launched. The website address is www.ifsa-forensics.org. While there is still work to be done on the website, we are excited to share that this will be the new home for IFSA and the many work products produced by this organization including the Minimum Requirements Documents that were published last year at the World Forensic Festival in Seoul, Korea.

These documents are meant to act as a start-up guide for emerging forensic laboratories to quickly establish their quality management system and scientific/technical capabilities to provide services to the criminal justice system. Once achieved, the laboratories should continue to build on this foundation and strive to continually improve the quality of services through undergoing accreditations to established standards.

The MRD addresses the following framework:

1.       Competence of Personnel

2.       Equipment and Consumables

3.       Collection; Analysis; Interpretation; Reporting

4.       Procedures; Protocols; Validation

5.       Quality Management

MRDs have been released for Crime Scene Investigation, DNA analysis, and Seized Drugs analysis. Future efforts will include electronic evidence, latent prints, and questioned documents. Additionally, IFSA is striving to have all MRDs published in the 6 recognized languages of the United Nations including English, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, French, and Spanish.

In closing, I want to express my sincere gratitude to Pavel Kolar, the Institute of Criminalistics Prague, and the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes for hosting an incredible meeting in such a wonderful location. Congratulations to ENFSI on 20 amazing years! I am looking forward to a great week and wish you all the best now and into the future!