

Bourse of Gothenburg Speech – Stephen Schmidt, ITS Chair

Good evening.

It is a great pleasure and honour to be here, together with you, in our marvellous host city of Gothenburg, and in this historic building, on the occasion of the *31st European Conference of the International Telecommunication Society (ITS)*.

Belated congratulations, to the citizens of Gothenburg, on the City's 400th birthday, celebrated last June (June, 2021)!

ITS

The International Telecommunications Society (ITS) was founded in 1986 and is a global forum bringing together academia, government, and industry to identify pressing issues in communications policy, share research results, form new relationships, and progress a global conversation about communications policy.

This is the 2nd time that a major ITS conference has been held in Gothenburg, with the 5th European Conference held here in June 1993.

This conference is part of a nearly 30-year collaboration (of conference organization, teaching, publishing and more) between the ITS and Chalmers University of Technology.

Although the ITS is a global organization, *if it had a home*, it would very genuinely be here, at Chalmers, and in Gothenburg – the heart of ITS.

Gothenburg is a global city

Founded in 1621, Gothenburg has played a key role in early globalization, with its port serving as Sweden's primary trading gateway to the world – exporting Swedish commodities and goods, but also knowledge and culture.

In the 1700s, trade through the port increased sharply because of the success of the Swedish East India Company, which opened trade with China, India and the Far East.

The birth of Chalmers University is, in fact, intimately tied with the trade with China. William Chalmers was a director of the Swedish East India Company and was, for many years, stationed at Guangzhou and in Macau. The wealth he left, by will, would lead to the founding of Chalmers University.

Today, 400 years later, Gothenburg remains central to Sweden's global influence, exporting electric vehicles, intelligent transport systems, 5G network equipment, as well as a *vision of a better future* shared through Swedish ideas about public education, gender equality, and environmental stewardship.

Gothenburg is a global city and right home for this event and our guests from 25+ countries around the world.

Gothenburg is a technology city

Gothenburg has long been a global technology leader:

- **For example, in 1902, Gothenburg was one of the pioneers in the adoption of electrified mass transit systems**, in the form of electric trams. This flowed from the work of Sigfrid Edström, a graduate of Chalmers University (Chalmers Class of 1891).
- **And, as we heard this morning, Gothenburg is still home to world-leading transportation technology initiatives**, including the car manufacturer Volvo, as well as the bold, ambitious Västlänken railway project – which aims to profoundly transform public transportation, in Gothenburg, and radically reduce dependence on private vehicles.
- Once again Gothenburg is on the leading edge of transportation innovation and electrification.

Just as Chalmers University strives to translate scientific and engineering research into applied technology and industrial innovation:

Gothenburg is a place where technologies are developed and deployed to improve well-being and address global problems such as climate change.

That Gothenburg supports global technology leadership makes it the right place for an ITS conference.

Thank you

I want to offer my deep and most sincere gratitude to the City of Gothenburg, the citizens of Gothenburg, and to **Lord Mayor Anneli Rhedin**, for being our hosts both this evening and throughout our time in the city.

I also extend my sincere thanks to:

- The conference academic host, Chalmers University,
- Professor Mats Lundqvist, of Chalmers, for his vision and support for the conference;
- The local conference organizer, Professor Erik Bohlin of Chalmers University; and
- My ITS Europe colleagues, Dr. Jason Whalley and Dr. Volcker Stocker, as co-organizers of the conference.

Hockey

I am disappointed that for the first time in 16 years Canada did not win a medal in men's hockey at the 2022 Beijing Olympics, defeated 2-0 in the quarterfinal at the hands of . . . Sweden, who finished 4th, as I'm sure you know.

However, my disappointment with this outcome is more than balanced by the fact that Frölunda HC's very own Daniel Alfredsson played for the Ottawa Senators for 17 years, in the city where I live.

And by the fact that Canada's women's team won gold in Beijing, defeating Sweden along the way.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at this reception, as well as the conference, to talk about telecommunications policy, your remarkable city, or ice hockey.

Thank you!