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Welcome International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations

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Welcome International Society for the
Comparative Study of Civilizations
Dr. John M. Dunn
June 4, 2009

- Good morning and welcome to Western Michigan University. I understand you come from at least 12 different nations to be with us today for the 39th annual world conference of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations.
- It is our honor to be your host institution and I hope your visit to our campus and our community is enjoyable. You represent many disciplines from a number of great colleges and universities. I hope that while you are here, you take the opportunity to visit your Western Michigan University colleagues to see their work environments and talk about their research. We're in summer session now, so not everyone is here, but I'm sure you will find a warm welcome should you want to reach out.
- I suspect that we gained a slight edge in hosting your conference because of the identity of your president, Dr. Andrew Targowski, who is a longtime and valued faculty member on our campus--in our Department of Business Information Systems. His background in the international arena and his obvious academic depth and multidisciplinary interests are qualities we treasure. He fits right in with our diverse international faculty.
- As I look through your program, I find that your choice of topics shows a determination to tackle the critical issues facing our world head on. War, economic collapse and the clash of world religions will figure prominently in your

discussions as you embrace your theme of "Civilization in a Time of Change and Crisis."

- I would expect nothing less from an organization with the credentials and history your organization possesses. Your commitment to discussing and attacking such problems by using diverse multidisciplinary analyses is one that resonates with me personally and intellectually.

- I am particularly appreciative of this year's effort to bring students from a wide range of disciplines into the discussion with the paper and art competition that took place on our campus earlier this year. There are eight Western Michigan University students who were challenged and encouraged to explore the issues and bring their own unique and discipline-specific perspectives to the discussion. I thank you for making them a part of your gathering and helping to ensure a new generation of scholars is ready to make its contributions.

- One of your founders, Arnold J. Toynbee, once said "Civilization is a movement and not a condition, a voyage and not a harbor." He eloquently identified the fluid nature of civilizations. I believe, as I hope you do, that the fluid nature is an asset that offers us opportunity for thoughtful analysis and carefully considered changes when our direction is flawed.

- Thoughtful analysis and careful consideration is what you are here to accomplish. It is my fervent hope that you are spectacularly successful in your work. I cannot think of a more worthy endeavor.

- Enjoy your visit with us and please know you are always welcome here.

- Thank you.