

Bringing progress to everyday life all around the world

I am proud that Bouygues is part of the circle of major French industrial groups which contribute to our country's influence and reputation all over the world.

The roots and culture of the Bouygues group, founded by Francis Bouygues 65 years ago, are undeniably French. In our construction businesses, the expertise and creativity of our engineers – many of them trained in France – are a decisive factor. Their involvement in major international projects alongside engineers of other nationalities produces excellent results. When I travel abroad, it gives me great satisfaction to hear our customers say that with Bouygues they are getting skill, expertise and quality in meeting deadlines for building generally complex and highly technical projects. Some even say that we are to construction what German car-makers are to the automobile industry. But Bouygues' contribution to France's international prestige is built, even more than on power, results or performance, on its people, whether French or not, on their talents and on strong, shared values. Our conviction, the compass that guides our action at all levels, is that a business is not a matter of money or processes but first and foremost a real-life journey with the customer at its heart. A business is also an organisation that conveys values and plays a key role in addressing the economic, social and societal challenges that face our planet.

Drawing on its 118,000 employees and wide range of businesses, Bouygues has given itself the mission of improving people's daily lives, of bringing progress every day, wherever it operates – which is all around the world.

With its talents and its capacity for innovation, our group aims to ensure that our culture and our expertise provide a practical and proactive response to two major challenges facing our world today: the environment and demography.

Our people use their globally acknowledged expertise to create structures which strengthen the social fabric, improve urban environments, facilitate exchange and protect the planet. Bouygues' flagship projects in nearly 90 countries around the world serve in a way as a showcase for French know-how, an achievement of which we can all be rightly proud.

Three bridges come to mind: the world's longest, whose 40-kilometre span connects Macau, Zhuhai and Hong Kong; the world's tallest cable-stayed bridge, reaching a height of 403 metres above the Baluarte river in Mexico; and the Konan Bédié bridge in Abidjan, which cuts the journey between the north and south of the city from two hours to five minutes.

There are tunnels too, like the one we have built under the port of Miami, or the 9-kilometre NorthConnex twin tunnel that we are currently building in Sydney, Australia, or the Chep Lak Kok tunnel in Hong Kong, which has been dug 50 metres under the sea.

Then there is the mighty Hassan II mosque in Casablanca, where the world's tallest minaret crowns a religious and cultural complex that is all the more remarkable for being partly built on the sea. And of course there are those ultimate symbols of the much-admired French way of life, the great Parisian luxury hotels that we have renovated or built – the Crillon and the Ritz, the Royal Monceau, the Prince de Galles and the Shangri La.

Finally, there is the Chernobyl confinement shelter, built in partnership with another major French firm, Vinci, and requiring a high degree of technical skill in extremely demanding conditions.

As well as building these flagship structures, the Bouygues group has a more everyday impact in improving people's lives. It may take the form of positive-energy buildings or housing that is increasingly suited to new uses. It may promote sustainable and desirable urban environments through eco-neighbourhoods and smart cities incorporating local services that foster community life, economic development and integration into the regional ecosystem. It may involve major innovations like Colas' Wattway solar road, which integrates photovoltaic panels into the road surface – just one kilometre is enough to cover the power consumption needed to light a town of 5,000 inhabitants.

But whatever these exceptional and everyday achievements, Bouygues contributes to French prestige and influence through the men and women who embody the company all over the world. If they stand as models for their skills and values, it owes much to the Minorange guild. Often imitated but never equalled, the guild was created by Francis Bouygues in 1963 as a community that distinguishes our best site workers for their skills, their professional integrity and their mindset. Its 1,064 members worldwide are ambassadors for the Group's know-how both within and outside the company. Conveyors of excellence and the values they stand for, they play a major role in meeting the new challenges of sustainable construction. They are in a way the flag-bearers of a conviction shared by all our people all over the world – that building the future is our greatest adventure.

Martin Bouygues