

Dear Minister and participants of Offshore Northern Seas 2010.

As Rector of the University of Stavanger, I am really proud to be a part of this new “Centre for Drilling and Well technology for improved Recovery”, established today between the applied research institutions IRIS and SINTEF, in addition to the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and the University of Stavanger.

The drilling and well technology has been under continuous development and improvement over the last decades, and has been one of the most important factors for increasing the drainage of the petroleum reservoirs in the North Sea.

To ensure that future wells will be drilled in an even safer manner, more research is needed. And what is of crucial importance is that this ongoing and future research and improved competence is being taught to both the current and the next generation of drilling engineers.

The Department of Petroleum Engineering of University of Stavanger has already started the process of establishing a new Master of Science program, specializing in Drilling and Well technology, based on an initiative from the industry. The drilling engineer needs thorough knowledge in a range of base topics, such as geology, mechanical engineering, chemical engineering, computer science and engineering cybernetics.

The “Centre for Drilling and Well technology for improved Recovery” gives a great opportunity to get an even closer cooperation with the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and the focus will be to improve also the PhD education within Drilling and Well technology. The PhD candidates have an excellent opportunity to explore and examine future drilling concepts and tools, in addition to enhance the way drilling operations are performed.

I am also enthusiastic in the Centre’s close cooperation between SINTEF and IRIS, improving the dialogue between their researchers and our faculty and students, giving them the opportunity to exchange both knowledge and research challenges. This centre will strengthen our international R&D contacts.

We also welcome the industry currently involved with Drilling and Well technology both in Norway and abroad, to join us in making this Centre vital partner for improving their staff, their products and their services.