H.E. the Minister underlined the activities of the Ministry of Antiquities as well as the importance to work collaboratively, between the Ministry and scholars. He emphasized his disappointment to the lack of response from Egyptologists when Egyptian antiquities were sold on the auction market. He hoped for warmer support and dedication to the preservation of Egyptian heritage from its long-standing partners in research. He also invited committed scholars to express interest into collaborating and associating themselves with the latest activities of the Ministry, especially the shaping up of the website and the scientific content of museums, giving scholars a platform for accessible outreach.

The audience of the Twelfth International Congress of Egyptologists was welcomed by Dr Mustafa Waziri, the Director of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, who introduced His Excellency Dr Khaled El-Enany the Minister of Antiquities, in the grandiose Khalifa Hall of the Marriott Mena House Hotel at the base of the Giza Plateau pyramids. The Congress was also under the patronage of the International Association of Egyptologists, whose Director Christopher Naunton announced the end of his and his administration’s mandate, welcoming Dr Willeke Wendrich from UCLA at the head of the IAE.

Four Honourrees were awarded an ICE Award, in the shape of the golden Horus jewel of Tutankhamun, logo of the ICE 12 2019: Dr Stephan Seidlmayer, Dr Sakuji Yoshimura, Dr Mark Lehner, and Dr Zahi Hawass. The importance of their tangible impact in their collaborations with the Ministry of Antiquities was underlined.

Dr Zahi Hawass presented the results of the last three years’ excavations in the King’s Valley and the Valley of the Monkeys, on the west bank of Luxor, both sites dating to the 18th and 19th Dynasties. He shared his passion and expectations for his sites, as well as the promising results recently announced. The results of the John Hopkins University’s excavations presented by Prof Betsy M. Bryan show that the Mut precinct was initially designed for Mut, agent of Ra, like Sakhmet, rather than the consort of Amon, a shift that happened during the reign of Amenhotep III. Industrial neighbourhoods were also uncovered, an incredible chance to understand sections of the ancient settlement of Thebes.

The first sessions of the conference started in all six halls. Von Pilgrim’s talk, as well as Bavay’s research show the importance of studying a site diachronically, as Aswan’s remains date from the Old Kingdom to the Roman period. By examining Belgian Egyptologist Jean Capart’s journey across the USA, De Meyer underlines the importance of museum collections throughout the world, to act as modern ambassadors for Egypt’s heritage. Museum have the responsibility to disseminate research, and the conscious dealing of objects was stressed by Greco, while virtual repositories of Meroitic objects was by Rondot.

Sheikholeslami uncovered that that the priests of the god Montu, a powerful god of Thebes, had a crucial role in lending the Kushite kings legitimacy in 25th Dynasty.