Welcome speech at the reception for ETAPS 2002
Paul Jacquet
Research Vice President of INPG

It's a real pleasure for me to welcome you in Grenoble, on behalf of the Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble, for the 5th edition of the now well-known and well-established ETAPS conferences

Grenoble is known as a young and modern scientific, industrial and sporty city, but it has also a not so well-known academic past. The university was created in 1339. At this time it was the popes who created universities, and it was already on the request of leading local personalities. In our case the pope was Benoit XII, and the leading citizen was the count Humbert II. This guy was particularly visionary because he created the Delphinal Council which became one century after, the Parliament of Grenoble. This institution played an active role in the debate of ideas leading to the French revolution. This was the beginning, among other things, of a deep transformation of education in France and in Europe. It was in Grenoble that Champollion wrote the first compiler for the hieroglyphic language; it was also in Grenoble that the eponym prefect Joseph Fourier did his mathematical and physical work.

The simultaneous scientific and technical expansion of Grenoble began one century ago. First of all, a law in 1896 conferred to universities a relative financial autonomy, secondly, electrical energy (in particular hydro electric power) was developed at the same time. This was the beginning of the growth of schools of engineers on one side, and of a long tradition of cooperation between industrials and academics on the other side. This cooperation is still strong and alive today in Grenoble.

The Polytechnical Institute began his development in the bosom of university. The first created school was a school of electrical engineers, rapidly followed by a school of paper-maker engineers then came a school of electrochemistry and electrometallurgy then a school of hydraulic and mechanics, then electronic, then computer science and applied mathematics (in 1960 the mathematician Jean Kuntzman created a special section of the Polytechnic Institute to train engineers in the field of electronic calculators. This section became a school in 1969 and lean Kuntzman was the first director). I will let my colleague Farid Ouabdesselam tell you shortly the story of computer science development in Grenoble.

L'Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble has now nine schools and one new telecommunication department. We deliver 1100 engineer diplomas per year. An interesting point is that we have also 34 research laboratories (mainly in partnership with CNRS and UJF) and we deliver 180 PhD per year.

The Rhone-Alpes region is the place chosen to develop a great project on a general theme called "numerical": from physical components to embedded software. This project is centered in Grenoble where the triptych: formation, research and industry is particularly developed. There are two main sub-projects, one on technologies called MINATEC for micro & nano technologies and one on software called CTL for software technologies center. The first project is carried by INPG for Grenoble universities, the second one by University Joseph Fourier also for Grenoble universities.

MINATEC is a big project (one hundred and fifty millions of euros) which will gather on the formation side two schools of INPG (electronic, physic), on the research side six academic laboratories together with the LETI lab from the Atomic study center and on the industrial side a lot of major groups and start-ups. This project aims to become Europe's top center for innovation and expertise in micro and nanotechnologies.

Grenoble has a powerful advanced microelectronics capability and considerable software expertise. Taken in conjunction, these skills give Grenoble the potential to become a major European centre for the design of tomorrow's communicating objects. For this purpose, we will need one more time, complex, secure and robust software. To achieve this aim it is crucial to dispose of strong fundamental & practice tools.

I wish you a very fruitful conference and a pleasant stay in Grenoble, where I hope to see you again.

Thank you very much.