WELCOMING ADDRESS: Dr Lothar Hahn, Technical Director GRS

Dr Hahn welcomes the participants, and thanks the previous speaker (B. Smith) for the introduction. He is pleased to see there are so many participants to the workshop. He continues:

Most of you know GRS and have been in contact with us on various occasions; nevertheless, let me briefly recall a few basic facts about the organisation for which I serve as Director for Scientific and Technical Matters.

The Garching branch of our Company comprises 100 people, more than 70 of them scientific staff. The focus is on safety research. Application, however, is closely linked to research, e.g. in using our own codes for analysis in the context of safety assessment.

Coming to this location, you might have noticed the growing new Campus of the Technical University of Munich (TUM). We are in the process of reactivating the links to several institutes in order to share advanced technologies. CFD is a good example: to engage young scientists in the form of diploma work or doctoral theses and, last not least, to share the academic spirit of the location.

Contrary to trends in many countries operating nuclear reactors, we are no longer facing repeated budget reductions for our work, but we were able to convince our sponsors, that is, the Federal Government, to stabilize the public funds for reactor safety. This enables us to replace retiring colleagues by hiring new people and thereby contributing a substantial share to the German Alliance for Nuclear Competence.

GRS is not only a research organisation but a Technical Support Organisation (TSO) in the true sense. Safety assessment in support of the Federal Government offers a wide spectrum of challenging tasks. Even seemingly routine tasks, like the evaluation of operating experience or our presently most ambitious task, the comprehensive review and partly restructuring of our regulations and guidelines, rely strongly on deep scientific knowledge and professional technical skills to be further developed to reflect the latest State-of-the-Art.

However, we are not attempting to act as a TSO in a self-satisfied attitude. We strive for a network of TSOs in Europe. We build close relations with our partners: IRSN (France) in the first place. Recently, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IRSN and the Association VinÇotte Nuclear (AVN), and we are open to extend the association with other organisations. Indeed, the prominent role of TSOs for ensuring safety has been recognised by the IAEA, GRS participated recently at an international conference in Aix-en-Provence in April 2007 on this topic.

As the current CSNI (Committee for the Safety of Nuclear Installations) Chairman, I take great interest in scientific cooperation in all matters of nuclear reactor safety. Workshops and Specialist Meetings, initiated and organized by the CSNI, are among the most efficient instruments to this end. It is my intention to streamline the CSNI work by applying innovative techniques to better serve the resolution of safety issues, and to concentrate resources on the most challenging topics.

As depicted by the acronym CFD4NRS, the scope of this Workshop comprises both features: on the one hand, it brings together developers and users of advanced numerical simulation tools with experimental researchers. On the other hand, it addresses actual safety issues that cannot be resolved without advanced computational tools and new experimental findings. In particular, boron dilution, sump-clogging and Pressurised Thermal Shock (PTS) are widely recognised as relevant safety topics requiring clarification, and I am pleased to see that these issues being addressed here.

In conclusion, on behalf of GRS, I would like to thank the organisers for giving us the opportunity to host this important workshop, the sponsors for their support, and a special mention to Frau Scheuerer for putting in place the local infrastructure necessary for the workshop to take place. My best wishes to you all and the success of your meeting.