OPENING ADDRESS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to open the 1997 Conference on Computing in High Energy Physics, CHEP97. I would like to welcome you to Berlin and I am happy to see so many old friends in the auditorium. I would like to recall why DESY has been asked to organize this conference, why CHEP97 is taking place here in Berlin, and why we are finally meeting at this specific location.

DESY is one of the major laboratories in High Energy Physics and has a rich particle physics program: three experiments - H1, ZEUS and HERMES - are taking data at the ep collider HERA. A fourth, very demanding experiment -HERA-B- is in preparation. Yet another big challenge is the R&D program for a future linear electron positron collider. An important ingredient to the laboratory's infrastructure is the modern computing environment. At preceding CHEP conferences, many substantial contributions came from DESY, and it seemed to be natural that DESY should organize a CHEP conference.

For some of you, I have to give a short explanation why we do not meet in Hamburg. Since January 1, 1992, DESY has two sites, one in Hamburg, and one in Zeuthen near Berlin. The main site in Hamburg hosts the large experimental facilities and the majority of scientists. In Zeuthen is a smaller laboratory, which emerged after the German unification from an institute of the Academy of Science of the former GDR. Today, scientists from the Zeuthen laboratory are actively involved in most of DESYs research activities. In addition, the research program of Zeuthen has specific flavours important for the profile of the laboratory, one of them being (-astrophysics, the other HPCN. Scientists from DESY Zeuthen are attempting to install a large (-telescope in the ice of the southpole, to identify neutrinos from cosmic accelarators.

In Zeuthen's computer center, massively parallel APE100 computers have been installed in 1994. At present, almost 40 GFlops of CPU power are available. Main user is the LQCD community from the universities. By our Italian colleagues it has already been demonstrated that these machines can be used for non-QCD applications. At DESY attempts are being made to use these machines to solve problems like particle tracking and simulation of electromagnetic fields. The development of the next generation of machines (APE1000) started a few years ago at the INFN. Physicists and engineers from DESY are actively involved and develop specific hard- and software solutions. Therefore, it was a good idea to have the conference here as it will also draw the attention of the CHEP community to DESY-Zeuthen. The HEPIX workshop will be at Zeuthen immediately after CHEP'97, so many of you will have a chance to visit the site.

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Berlin is a good place for a computing conference in any case, as it was here where Konrad Zuse built the first programmable digital computer! Furthermore, Berlin is a very interesting city which experienced dramatic changes during the last years and whose parts are growing together after decades of unnatural separation.

I feel compelled to add a few words on the conference location because it will convey an idea of the dramatic changes this city and country experienced during the past years. We decided to hold CHEP'97 in the Rathaus (town hall) Schneberg, an excellent conference location and a beautiful building. All our preparations were going very well, when only ten days before the conference a fire broke out in the building.

Easter Monday it turned out that the contaminated site had to be closed for indefinite time. We were facing the need of having to cancel CHEP'97, but then we luckily found this place here, the Lichtenberger Congress Centrum (LCC), to be available on such short notice. There might be some inconveniences, but the conference will run as anticipated, without changes to the program.

For us, this change of locations has also a symbolic and emotional connotation. Rathaus Schöneberg, the seat of the government of West Berlin, was for many years a symbol for the fight for freedom and human rights. The Rathaus is housing the famous "Bell of Freedom" and it was in front of this building where John F. Kennedy gave his unforgotten 1963 speech showing the people of Berlin and East Germany that the free world were not abandoning them. By ironic contrast, the place we are meeting today was only a few years ago a center of totalitarian power, a symbol of terror and fear: the headquarters of the infamous Staatssicherheit (Stasi) of the GDR. It was converted into a conference center recently, and we can now look forward to our free scientific discussions in a place with such an ominous past.

Let me add a few comments on the scientific program of the conference. The important ingredients are, of course, provided by you, the participants. We received a total of more than 300 contributions, ending up with six rather dense parallel sessions and a poster session, proving that CHEP is a living subject. The plenary program clearly demonstrates the 'threefold base' of CHEP:

1. we will have several talks and panels on modern software technologies;
2. special emphasis will be put on applications and users' demands with panels on 'Computing at major HEP sites' and 'Computing models of HEP experiments';
3. A sizeable fraction of the program is reserved for presentations of modern developments by the IT industry.

I would like to express special thanks to the members of the International

Advisory Committee who had a great impact on the program and helped us a lot during the preparation of this event.

This conference is jointly organized by DESY people from Hamburg and Zeuthen. I would like to thank all these fine DESY people as they did a great job to get this conference running after all the trouble we had during the last seven days.

Finally, on behalf of the Organising Committee I wish you an interesting and exciting conference, and I hope you take the opportunity to also explore the City of Berlin.

U. Gensch