Message from General Chair

Benvenuti a Roma and welcome to the 23rd International Parallel and Distributed Processing Symposium. We cannot imagine that you would miss even a minute of Per Stenström's first-rate program, so we do hope that you were able to plan extra time to enjoy Rome, a city rich in history, monuments, piazzas and art that is permanently on display. In composing this message, I was tempted to liken our volunteer team to some of the old Roman deities but concluded that would not do justice to many of those named here. I will leave that exercise to others.

It has been a great honor to have Sapienza University of Rome host this event and to be selected as general chair responsible for organizing all of the pieces required to present IPDPS 2009. We expected many challenges with our particular venue – and there were many – but the strength and cohesiveness of the long-standing IPDPS community of volunteers simplified many of my tasks. Whenever I encountered questions or problems, whether technical or logistical, there was always someone with the requisite experience or advice to resolve issues and to keep conference development on track. I am especially grateful to my vice chair David Bader for sharing his IPDPS experience and wisdom.

Clearly, the success of this symposium is a direct result of the hard work and contributions made by many, including the organizing committee members, the steering committee, the authors and commercial participants—all of whom I gratefully acknowledge. Our program chair Per Stenström has done an outstanding job, ably assisted by the vice-chairs and the extraordinary support of program committee members who recruited additional expertise to conduct an unprecedented review. The care taken in selecting symposium papers extended to keynote speakers and the symposium panel, and I am proud to be associated with the technical excellence of the IPDPS 2009 program.

The Monday and Friday workshops are a hallmark of IPDPS, complementing the main program and giving IPDPS its global reach in exploring the full scope of parallel and distributed processing research and applications. We thank the dedicated workshop organizers for bringing their event to Rome and to the many participants for their contributions. Once again, we have the workshops chair Alan Sussman to thank for helping to ensure the continuity and quality of workshops and attending to the many "hidden" administrative tasks this requires. We join him in crediting his vice chair Umit Catalyurek with taking on much of the load and becoming a familiar face (or email address) to workshop organizers.

This year we have an excellent symposium tutorial presentation, thanks to tutorial chair Juergen Becker who answered my call to recruit proposals for topics that would be timely and appeal to the diverse interests of our attendees. In the spirit of our international conference, the tutorial presenters are from Spain, Germany, and the USA. We also attracted a commercial tutorial and appreciate the flexibility of the SiCortex group in arranging their participation. IPDPS 2009 also marks the second year of the TCPP PhD Forum, and we were pleased to have Yves Robert, the program chair for IPDPS 2008, serve as program chair for this event, which helps bring the next generation of researchers into the IPDPS community. Finally, on the technical front I want to acknowledge Yuanyuan Yang who served once again as proceedings chair, helping to ensure the integrity of our publication tasks.
We especially appreciate the work of her student assistant Xi Deng for the Herculean effort in early posting of paper abstracts to the Web.

As to publicity, the healthy response to the call for papers underscores the wisdom of asking the IPDPS 2008 co-chairs to volunteer again; our thanks to Ioannis Chatzigiannakis from Greece, Roberto Di Pietro from Italy, and Cho-Li Wang from Hong Kong. Closer to home, I have had superb support from my colleagues, including administrative chair Tiziana Calamoneri who took on the extremely critical task of issuing visa letters, with good help from her assistant Natascia Piroso. My student Julinda Stefa is also part of the local team who has coordinated with organizers on many mundane assignments to make sure our attendees know how to get around the city and all the places to dine (including MacDonald's). My organizing colleagues wanted me to highlight the importance of this Italian support in smoothing plans for the conference week.

Those familiar with IPDPS know about the several folks from California who yearly provide continuity to all of us other volunteers and who help bring everything together. My personal thanks to them for making it look like I know how to organize a conference: Bill Pitts as finance chair and liaison with IEEE and the Computer Society lays the contractual groundwork and then makes sure we are meeting budget. Susamma Barua as local arrangements chair makes sure that all of the local resources of space, audio-video support, and hotel logistics fully support the planned IPDPS program. Sally Jelinek as production chair provides coordination and oversight to all non-technical preparations and oversees production tasks including the Web and the program proceedings book for the conference. When IPDPS 2009 ends, I will miss waking up to their daily emails. Completing this reliable team of five are the steering co-chairs, Viktor Prasanna and George Westrom. It has been an unprecedented honor to work with them throughout the last year and to have the pleasure of becoming part of the team who has led this conference to its 23rd year. In particular, I want to thank Viktor for the visits to Italy and the confidence and support he has extended.

Vi auguro una bellissima settimana a Roma!

Alessandro Mei, IPDPS 2009 General Chair
Sapienza University of Rome