Welcome to Florence and to DSN 2004. This year’s DCCS program consists of 63 excellent papers that cover a wide range of dependability issues and show the depth and breadth of our community’s research efforts. This excellent collection is the result of a thorough selection process, keeping with the long tradition of this conference.

This year, the symposium received 276 submissions, a sharp increase compared to recent years and the third largest number over 34 years of a rich history. This attests to the growing importance of dependable computing and, more pointedly, to the vitality and creativity of our community. These submissions came from over 31 countries, and included 40 submissions from industry, 33 joint submissions between academia and industry, with the remaining bulk from universities and national research labs. There was also a marked increase in cross-organization and cross-country submissions compared to recent years. And reaffirming the international nature of this forum, all continents were represented in the submission pool.

The review process followed the tradition of thoroughness that has come to be expected of this conference. The program committee members suggested external reviewers for the regular papers in early December. The rate of completed reviews from external referees exceeded 90% of our goals. In total, 1201 completed reviews were produced for the 276 submissions. These reviews were discussed in a program committee meeting in Austin in the middle of February. Each regular paper was reviewed by 2 program committee members and up to 4 external reviewers, producing an average of 4.53 reviews per paper, while practical experience reports and software demonstration submissions were each reviewed by 3 program committee members.

The sharp increase in the number of submissions was particularly challenging, and generating 1201 reviews would not have been possible without the generous efforts of too many individuals in the community. Throughout this process I have witnessed our community in action, and it has shown that it is indeed a dependable one! So, I would like to thank and convey my deep appreciation to the 47 program committee members and the 698 external reviewers who volunteered their time and expertise to produce the reviews.

Many individuals have helped me in many ways during the 12 months of preparation that led to this program. I am grateful to João Gabriel Silva, David Powell, Bill Sanders, Rick Schlichting, and Paulo Veríssimo for their excellent advice, support and mentoring. Additionally, I would like to thank Patricia Esquivel and Bain Weinberger for their help in organizing the program committee meeting and other logistical functions.

Finally, I would like to thank the University of Texas at Austin for hosting the symposium’s Web site, and International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) for supporting the program committee meeting and partial sponsorship of the program.

I hope you will find the program rewarding and inspiring. Enjoy it and enjoy Florence!

E.N. (Mootaz) Elnozahy
DCCS Program Chair, 2004