Welcome to the 13th International Conference on Pattern Recognition (ICPR).

The 13th International Conference on Pattern Recognition, the biennial meeting of the International Association for Pattern Recognition is being held at the Technical University of Vienna, Austria, from August 25–29, 1996.

It has become a tradition of this series of conferences that they are a combination of four specialty conferences, the sessions of which are organized in four parallel tracks, each by its own program committee. Even a snowstorm could not prevent a record number of submissions this year: close to 1,000 full papers were been submitted and reviewed carefully by the program committees. Not only the quantity but also the scientific quality of the contributions was very high. After some balancing among the four tracks, the program contains 11 invited talks, 63 oral presentations in each track and a total number of 452 posters. While oral presentations attract a large audience, posters allow intensive discussion in small groups. Both types of papers were allowed the same number of pages in the proceedings. The papers in each track appear in one of the four volumes of these proceedings in the order in which they are being presented at the conference.

Such a big event as ICPR cannot take place without the help of many people who take responsibility for some parts of the complex organization. I would like to express my cordial thanks to the organizing committee and the program committees who reviewed and selected this impressive collection of papers representing the state of the art in the field, to the authors for the high scientific quality of the works presented, to the Technical University of Vienna for hosting the conference, and to the IEEE Computer Society for the smooth production of these proceedings. Last but not least, I would like to thank all the members of my department of Pattern Recognition and Image Processing, in short PRIP, for their enthusiasm and their support, and for spending extra hours preparing the conference in addition to their other tasks.

Apart from the scientific presentations, the social program provides numerous opportunities for you to establish and to renew personal and professional contacts and to experience together with new and old friends, some of the fascinating faces of Vienna. I am happy to welcome you to Vienna and I hope that you will have good memories of ICPR '96 when you open these proceedings.

Walter G. Kropatsch
General Conference Chairman
Technical University of Vienna
Institute for Automation 183/2
Department for Pattern Recognition and Image Processing
Austria
krw@prip.tuwien.ac.at