Message from the General Co-Chairs

Dear Participants, dear Guests,

It is our pleasure to welcome all participants to the 14th IEEE International Conference on Emerging Technologies and Factory Automation at the University of Balearic Islands, Palma de Mallorca, Spain. The fourteenth edition of this event coincides with a year of global economical crisis, especially in the industry field, and this fact is reflected in all our daily activities, and also in this ETFA edition. For this reason it is important to find new fields, closely related with the emerging technologies which have not been severely struck by the crisis. The imagination is the topic in this new era.

The ETFA conference was held for the first time in 1992, in Melbourne, Australia. Over the past seventeen years, the event has evolved into one of the largest and most important IEEE conferences dedicated to industrial and factory automation, presenting new results and providing discussions. The ETFA conference series was fortunate to be hosted by the leading academic and research institutions. The technical success of the ETFA conference series also testifies to the rapid evolution of the area of industrial automation in the recent decade. The proceedings of the conference give a fairly accurate picture of the state of the art of the area.

This year’s event is sponsored by the IEEE Industrial Electronics Society together with the Technical University of Catalonia (UPC), Barcelona, and the University of Balearic Islands (UIB), Mallorca, Spain. The Technical University of Catalonia, that held ETFA edition in 1999, is a public institution dedicated to higher education and research that specializes in the fields of architecture, science and engineering which is forward-looking and seeks to teach high quality technical courses that are responsive to the training needs and requirements of traditional, evolving and newly-developing production sectors, including aeronautics, photonics, supercomputing, bioengineering, water and energy, all within the scope of the European Higher Education and Research Areas. The Technical University of Catalonia seeks to reaffirm its social commitment to the surrounding area and endorse values of solidarity, cooperation, sustainability, equity and respect towards all people.

The conference will be held at the campus of the University of Balearic Islands, also a public institution which has committed itself to the quality, in teaching as well as in research and in its cultural activities. The culture, the language and the characteristics of Balearic Islands form the fundamental identity of the University which is modern, open to the world, and integrated in solid international university networks. The university attracts many students from abroad and accepts the challenge of the European Higher Education as well.

Most people know that Mallorca is the most popular tourist destination in Europe. It is also arguably the most beautiful island in the Mediterranean, largely because of the stunning variety of its scenery, the warm hospitality of the islanders and the richness of its food and drink. Visitors today can benefit from the same inspiring beauty and tranquillity that so impressed the composer Chopin, the poet Robert Graves and others before and after them.

Palma de Mallorca, the capital of the Balearic Islands, with an approximate population of 400,000 inhabitants, is a city open to the sea. All the different Mediterranean cultures and peoples passing through have left an ineludibly cultural legacy. In XXI century Palma de Mallorca is a modern, cosmopolitan city full of cultural life and great commercial dynamism with leisure activities over the whole year. The people of Palma, as all the inhabitants of the
archipelago, constitute a bilingual community (Spanish and Catalan). Nonetheless, in the streets of Palma an endless number of languages can be heard that demonstrate its hospitable and multicultural character, testimony to the fact that approximately 10 million tourists visit our islands every year. Excursions will be offered to get an impression of these attractions of Mallorca Island and the city of Palma.

The ETFA 2009 conference provides an excellent technical program, including plenary presentations delivered by some of the leading authorities in their field of scientific and technical endeavour. The quality of the technical program is a combination of high quality submissions and the diligent work of the International Program Committee. We would like to acknowledge the contribution of all Program Committee members and reviewers, who dedicated their time to the review of the submitted papers, and, in particular, Program Co-Chairs, Javier Campos of the University of Zaragoza, Spain, and Gabriel Oliver, University of Balearic Islands, Spain, for their excellent organization of the scientific part of the conference.

This year, as an innovation, the Energy Day replaces the traditional Industry Day. We are very delighted with the response of the panellists for this new activity, counting on renowned scholars as Frede Blaabjerg, Aalborg University, Denmark and Toshko Zhelev, University of Limerick, Ireland, and renowned researchers as Kas Hemmes, Samir Jemeï, María Paz Comech, Eric Monmasson, Giovanni Spagnuolo and Josep M. Guerrero. We would like to thank Red Eléctrica de España and GESA-ENDESA, the largest companies in energy transport and distribution respectively in Spain for their support and participation the Energy Day.

Another innovation is the Workshop on “Specialized Communication Networks: Applications in Industrial Automation, Automotive Systems, and Building Automation and Control”, a satellite event to ETFA, chaired by Richard Zurawski, scheduled in sessions of seventy-five minutes that will bring the attendees closer to the latest novelties in this field.

An event of this size cannot be organized without the help of a large number of volunteers. We would like to thank all of them for their valuable work. Our sincere gratitude goes also to the International Program Committee and its Chairs, the reviewers for their selfless work, the Workshop Day Committee, Honorary Chairs, Track Co-Chairs, International Advisory Committee, Local Committee, Special Session Co-Chairs, Work-in-Progress Co-Chairs, Finance Co-Chairs, Publication Chair, keynote speakers, and all the attendees who make possible this event. Finally, we would like to mention the Catalanian Autonomous Government and the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation for their support.

We hope you enjoy the conference, and have a nice stay in Palma de Mallorca.

Antoni Grau and James C. Hung
ETFA 2009 General Co-Chairs