

Welcome address for the LHC Grid Fest

CERN IT Department Head, Dr. Wolfgang von Rden

Distinguished Guests,

Colleagues at CERN and joining us from all over the world,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am proud and honoured to welcome you to this special event. After the very successful start of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) on 10th September, it is now the turn of the Worldwide LHC Computing Grid (WLCG) to celebrate the transition from a development and deployment phase into operation. I am very happy to tell you that we are ready to handle the unprecedented flood of data that will be generated by the LHC. The Grid has reached a sufficient level of maturity and stability to provide the required services to our physicists, who have, in fact, been taking data with cosmic muons for quite some time already.

The recent incident in the LHC machine will delay the arrival of physics data by a few months, but this is no reason to slow down our efforts. We follow our plan of ramping up the computing capacity in our computer centres to go beyond the level currently required in order to reach the expected volumes for 2009.

Our first session this morning will start with a general overview talk by our Director General, Dr. Robert Aymar, to be followed by a series of presentations by distinguished speakers covering the most important aspects of our ambitious science programme.

The second session, chaired by the WLCG Project Leader Dr. Ian Bird, addresses the theme of Grids and Society and the usage of Grids outside of High Energy Physics, followed by visionary statements from the European Commission and the National Science Foundation of the United States of America.

There will be opportunities to ask questions after each session. We will then proceed to the formal commemoration marking the start of data analysis on the Worldwide LHC Computing Grid.

I would like to underline the distributed nature of the Grid and pay tribute to the outstanding contributions from our collaborating institutes. We have many Grid sites around the world following this event via webcast. Most of the Tier1 sites plus a few Tier2 sites are connected via special links and I look forward to their live video participation later.

Last, but not least, we will focus on the important involvement of the computing industry, where the partners of the CERN openlab have played an exceptional role.

The afternoon is reserved for a more detailed session highlighting the data processing right from the experiments' raw data up to the end-user analysis, followed by a description of the WLCG and its services. After the coffee break, we will conclude with a session on openlab, with contributions from our three partners HP, Intel and Oracle.

Finally, as the sun moves to the west, we will repeat part of this morning's session live with our partners in the United States and Canada.

Let me thank you all for replying positively to our invitation, you honour our efforts with your presence here today and we are delighted to share this unique moment with you.

I wish you an interesting and enjoyable day at CERN.