

## **WELCOME ADDRESS**

**Prof. Petteri Taalas**

Director General, Finnish Meteorological Institute.

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you to the 7<sup>th</sup> International Winds Workshop on behalf of the Local Organising Committee and the Finnish Meteorological Institute. This is the first time that your workshop is held in Finland and I hope your stay here will be fruitful but not too windy.

Wind observations and forecasts are an important element in the work of the Finnish Meteorological Institute. Finland is beyond the seas to most of its neighbouring countries. Therefore, sea traffic has an immense value to our economy. The Baltic sea seems to you a small plot of water, but it is shallow, complex and has a lot of islands, which makes the circumstances very special to navigate under severe weather conditions. Your winds are primarily from the upper atmosphere and they have a considerable impact in the numerical model results. Thus your work is highly appreciated in Finland. Unfortunately, our contribution to Atmospheric Motion Vectors (AMVs) has been limited. Being a small country our resources are sparse and we have to rely on the work of others in many important fields. Still one has to emphasize that we have done something by sending Ken Holmlund to EUMETSAT years ago. Our strategy is to join and follow the scientific development and adapt the results whenever possible. Example of such a development is the use of AMV software by EUMETSAT to extrapolate weather radar fields in time. This application has been running operationally in FMI for several years successfully.

It is a pleasure to have you all in Helsinki. The surroundings where we have this meeting are part of the history of Nokia from 1940s. This building was a factory, which produced cables both for electricity and telephone networks. But already in the end of the 1980s the factory became obsolete and was gradually changed into a centre of culture, art and handicraft. Today, Nokia is producing something more sophisticated and undoubtedly the factories of today look more polished than this one.

This possibility to have IWWS in Finland just now is also very appropriate, because we have now the possibility to have Dr. Mohr as our guest for the last time as the Director General of EUMETSAT before his retirement. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his excellent work. Our relationship has been warm-hearted and co-operative throughout the years.

I also wish you all a successful Workshop and hopefully also some "happy hours" around the dinner table.