

Inauguration Ceremony of the Large Hadron Collider at CERN
Geneva, 21 October 2008

Address by Professor Jan Mikolaj,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Slovak Republic

Excellencies, Director General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am privileged to address you on this special occasion. There's no doubt, the achievements of CERN, being one of the leading nuclear research organisations worldwide, are extraordinary.

I would also like to appreciate the work of many talented physicists, who had contributed to the excellent results in the fields of particle research.

My admiration also goes to designers and constructors of the outstanding Large Hadron Collider, the most ingenious experimental device.

No less admiration goes to experts, analysing and collecting huge amounts of data in order to obtain the fundamental results, and, hopefully, one day, some new discoveries.

I must confess that I am proud of the fact that a part of all of this work is performed by physicists and engineers from Slovakia – a relatively small country and I am glad that our scientists actively participated in such an important research.

We know the importance of fundamental research. We also know that CERN is a driving force for development of new technologies and construction of new devices. This is one of the reasons why the Slovak government had been supporting the work of the Slovak experimental teams working at CERN since 1993. It will also keep on supporting it in the future.

We cherish the opportunity for our scientists to participate in unique scientific projects, the contribution to the Slovak industry, and the success of our companies in tenders, introduced by CERN. There's no doubt that the tenders will be beneficial both for the Slovak economy and its society.

Apart from the fundamental achievements of CERN, we also appreciate its other activities, such as high standard technical education including fellowships of our young physicists and engineers, the attendance of our summer

students at CERN, the Outreach activities of CERN and summer seminars for teachers of physics. These are the activities which bring young talented people from Slovakia back to their scientific and research carriers.

The scientific co-operation within CERN is one of the most successful multilateral scientific co-operations of the Slovak Republic. On behalf of the Ministry of Education I would like to express my thanks to the management of CERN for creating excellent conditions for participation of our teams in the NA57, NA49, ATLAS and ALICE experiments.

Let me; finally, congratulate the CERN Management and CERN Staff on the excellent results achieved during the construction and initial phase of the LHC. I wish the LHC project good luck, great results and fruitful future.

Thank you for your attention.