A message from the Prime Minister

We live in turbulent times. The stability of the world economy has been severely tested, and we in Europe have experienced our own difficulties as well. Climate change, in particular, remains a continuing concern and the ageing population is a common challenge for many European countries.

While a lot has been done, a lot still needs to be done. Particularly in terms of building stronger economic and social structures for the future and developing the technologies needed to underpin and drive them.

The main issue is to stay competitive in a rapidly changing global economy. Competitiveness can be measured in many different ways, but ultimately what counts is that the technologies, products, and services we offer meet people's expectations across a wide range of criteria and markets.

There has never been more choice in the marketplace than there is today – in terms of cost, speed of delivery, reliability, durability, or service availability, to name just a few of the factors involved. Responding effectively to this competitive challenge obviously involves building on existing strengths and getting as much out of them as possible. Given the speed with which technological development is progressing today, however, going beyond what you already excel at and developing or consolidating new areas of excellence is even more critical. Focusing resources where they can have the most impact, and encouraging people to innovate and succeed, are very much part of this, as is being as flexible and agile as you can.

Finland has built up an excellent track record in a variety of fields, many of which are covered here in HighTech Finland 2012/13. We have a lot to offer, I believe, and the range of technology available today and under development is growing all the time. I hope that the enthusiasm of the companies and organisations profiled here, which are responsible for many of these achievements, will inspire you as much as it does me.

Jyrki Katainen
Prime Minister of the Republic of Finland