

Mister President of the IOI,  
Mister Chair of the IOI 2011,  
Members of committees and working groups,  
Contestants, leaders, observers and guest,

I have the honor and pride to receive, as Chair of the IOI 2012 and on behalf of my country, Italy, the flag of the International Olympiad in Informatics. I assure you that we will do our best and above all that we will do it with the passion that we have learned and seen at work here in Thailand and in previous editions of the event. We will try to build on experience that the past host countries have left us. In particular, we can appreciate in Thailand, in addition to the wonderful hospitality, the excellent organization, the greater involvement of academic and public institutions and the quality of the sponsors: a model of choral organization that we will try to bring to the 24th edition.

Italy does agree with the goal of the IOI to focus attention on two groups: the first one, exceptionally talented young people in the fields of informatics, so that they can be a stimulus and reference to their peers; the second one, computer scientists and informatics educators, so that they can develop a model of friendly international relationships, tailored on the current communication tools, useful to all professional communities, in the wake of the uninterrupted tradition of modern science.

On the other hand we all know that the objective of bringing the discipline of informatics to the attention of young people has changed since the Organization was established: now that young people are digital natives, the new challenge is to make them aware of the proper use of digital tools and especially make them aware of the necessity to have a personal ability to give value to information and knowledge that reach them directly through these means. The problem, once quantitative, has become qualitative.

This concept has been emphasized in several effective speeches of the opening ceremony, including the one of His Excellency the Prime Minister.

In this perspective, we are inspired by the great personality of Leonardo da Vinci: we would like to take him as an ideal patron of the 24th IOI in Italy, both because he can rightly be considered the prototype of the modern scientist with his striving for innovation and research and his versatility and because he has left his mark in Lombardy, our region, with great works still admirable.

To summarize Leonardo's spirit, I read to our young contestants a quotation, that perhaps symbolizes also their spirit.

"Once you learn to fly you always walk on the ground watching the sky, because once you've been there you always long to return."

We wait for you all in Italy next year!