Dear Mr. Deputy Rector, Dear Guests, Dear Colleagues and Students, Dear Professor Kurt Mehlhorn.

It is a day of great pleasure for the Department of Computer Engineering and Informatics today. In the thirty-seven years history of our Department, the first Honorary Doctorate of the School of Engineering of the University of Patras is awarded after a (unanimous of course) proposal by the Assembly of the Department. Professor Kurt Mehlhorn is undoubtedly the most suitable choice for this first award.

Not only for his great contribution to our science, but also for the strong ties he had, has, and will surely continue to have, with our Department.

Professor Kurt Mehlhorn is not only a major scientist with a rich internationally recognized work and influence, but also one of the pioneers of the IT landscape in his country, internationally, but mainly in Europe. For many years he has been the Director of the internationally renowned Max Planck Institute for Informatics in Germany, supervisor of 84 PhDs from different countries, many of whom are influential in our science, he holds many distinctions and awards from the most important international scientific organizations, he is an Honorary Doctor of four European and American universities, vice-president for many years of the Max Planck Society, a member of the European Research Council ERC. Thus, Professor Kurt Mehlhorn has a rightful place between a group of scientists and leaders who have given and continue to give Europe its distinct identity in research in IT and beyond.

But Professor Kurt Mehlhorn, it is no exaggeration to say that he has contributed to shaping a large part of our Department's physiognomy. He was a supervisor of the Ph.D. thesis of Professor Athanasios Tsakalidis, hosted for a long time at Max Planck Institute for Informatics visiting professors such as Athanasios Tsakalidis, Paul Spirakis, Christos Zaroliagis and Panagiotis Triantafyllou, as well as many postgraduate students and researchers from the Department as scholars. He also collaborated in many European basic research projects with faculty of the Department.

Today's award to Professor Kurt Mehlhorn of the Honorary Doctorate of the School of Engineering of the University of Patras, is an indispensable recognition of his general - to the science of Informatics - but also of his specific contribution - to our Department. The faculty, students and PhDs of our Department are proud of the addition - and typically now ... - of Professor Kurt Mehlhorn to our family members.

Welcome Professor.

Thank you.