

Foreword

The Directive Board

This report presents a description of the different research activities of ITN during the year 2009 and includes also a summary of the evolution in management, human resources, publications and budget of the last years of activity of ITN under authority of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

The ongoing international economic crisis has had an obvious negative effect on the budgetary situation of most institutions and ITN has been one of them. Shortage of financial and human resources continue being the main difficulty and it was with a great effort that ITN reached most of the objectives set for 2009. In spite of these severe limitations ITN could keep its level of scientific productivity both in quality and number of scientific publications.

The year 2009 was also significant for ITN as it corresponded to the first visit of its International Advisory Board that assessed the organization and performance of the institution and produced a report with suggestions for changes aiming at improving ITN's operational efficiency.

The difficulties previously described did not allow following all the Advisory Board suggestions. However, among others it was possible to channel some resources in order to buy a new ICPMS machine that is expected to significantly improve the response capabilities of the Safety and Radiological Protection Unit.

Finally, ITN took advantage of a new programme financed by FCT, *Ciência 2008*, through which 8 new post-doc researchers could be hired under 5 years contracts and are now working at the "campus". Thus, once again, ITN's research capacity was significantly reinforced with young researchers.

As in the previous reports, the research activity of ITN is presented in this one considering each research unit and the scientific output is grouped under the different areas of activity.

A word of praise is again due to the scientific and non scientific staff of ITN that never failed helping the Directive Board in maintaining the tradition of excellence of this institution. All the work that was carried out in 2009 could not be possible without the outstanding quality and motivation of ITN staff.