Message from the Steering Committee Chair

The 13th offering of SACMAT signals a time of maturity and transition for us. It has been my honor and privilege to serve as Steering Committee Chair starting with the inaugural meeting in 1995. I have enjoyed this role, especially working with so many outstanding colleagues in providing a guiding hand. It is my pleasure to hand over the Chair position to Gail-Joon Ahn. Gail is a regular author at the conference, was Program Chair in 2005 and since then a member of the Steering Committee. Our personal association goes back to his PhD dissertation which he completed under my direction in Fall 1999. I am confident he will lead SACMAT to continued and growing success in the future. The Steering Committee is also being reorganized in this process. These steps will bring us in compliance with the recently announced SIGSAC policy of limiting the size of the Steering Committee to six members, including the Chair, and imposing term limits. I think these changes are good for SIGSAC and for SACMAT and signify a maturing of our community.

It all began with a meeting in SETA corporation in McLean, Virginia in late Summer of 1995. The four co-authors of the landmark RBAC96 paper were working on a NIST funded SBIR project at SETA and David Ferriaolo of NIST was our collaborator and technical manager for the project. The RBAC96 paper was under review at IEEE Computer but was being circulated. The security community, especially vendors and users, were starting to take RBAC seriously. It seemed appropriate to the group to start a research workshop. David offered to host it at NIST, in my capacity as SIGSAC Chair I offered to bring it under the SIGSAC umbrella and SETA stepped up to provide support. The first RBAC workshop was held at NIST 11/30-12/1 1995. The next three workshops were held in Fall in 1997, 1998 and 1999 at George Mason University. It was then decided to move the timing so it not interfere with the ACM CCS conference which had established Fall as its time. The 2000 RBAC workshop was held on a compressed schedule in July and took us to Berlin, Germany, our first move away from the Washington DC area.

The first meeting under the SACMAT name took place in 2001 and brought us back to the Washington DC area in May. Since then SACMAT has been offered in June alternately in Europe and USA. The job of the Steering Committee has been easy and hard. Easy because we have had multiple offers more or less every year to host the conference, hard because we obviously can go only to one place. The choice of Program Chair has always been hard since we so many deserving people who would like to do this task.

In my assessment SACMAT is in excellent shape and has a bright future. As security concerns move up the stack the importance of Access Control will grow. Traditional access control was developed in an enterprise environment and tends to be heavyweight in many aspects. The future requires more agile models and mechanisms that can provide appropriate levels of security without clogging the system through heavyweight friction. The community has many challenges to address and I am sure we will see some very interesting research over the next few years.

I would like to conclude with one note of caution. In the early days of the RBAC workshops we always had participation from vendors and users. This was very valuable to the attendees and I can personally attest to many insights I obtained by listening to vendors and even more so to users. As SACMAT has matured we have lost some of this kind of participation. It is vital for researchers to stay in touch with real-world problems. There are many interesting lessons that users of access control technology can tell us. I would urge the next generation of SACMAT leaders to consider of maintaining strong contact with the vendor and user communities so as to enrich our research.

Ravi Sandhu, *Steering Committee Chair, 1995-2008*