It is a great pleasure to welcome the delegates to 56th annual meeting of the
International working group of hot laboratories and remote handling during September 8-12,
2019 at Mamallapuram. It is appropriate that IGCAR is organizing this first ever meeting held
in India coinciding with its 48th year of formation and is in the threshold of entering the
commercial phase of fast breeder reactors.

IGCAR is presently one of the few institutions worldwide to pursue a vibrant fast
breeder reactor programme with closed fuel cycle facilities. The importance of technologies
associated with shielded facilities were recognized right from the conceptual stage of FBR
programme and a comprehensive hot cell facility was established in IGCAR co-locating it with
FBTR for post-irradiation examination of in-core materials. The facility has paid rich dividends
by providing valuable data on the irradiation performance of the unique, high-plutonium
mixed-carbide fuel used in FBTR facilitating burn-up enhancement. With PFBR in advanced
stage of commissioning and an integrated fuel cycle facility being built adjacent to it, there is a
need to consolidate the expertise gained over the years in remote technologies for deployment
in the upcoming facilities. Metal fuel proposed for future fast breeder reactors will necessitate
improved remote handling capabilities in all fuel cycle activities including fuel fabrication.

I am glad to note that there is an overwhelming response and around ninety overseas
degleges are participating in the meeting. The papers proposed to be presented in HOTLAB
2019 cover wide ranging topics such as development of new shielded facilities, mechanical and
analytical characterization techniques, ageing management and refurbishment of hot
laboratories, development of remote handling equipments, waste management, safety and
radiological hygiene, etc. which are highly relevant. I wish the meeting and its participants all
success. I also wish the delegates from abroad and outstation participants a pleasant and
comfortable stay.

(Arun Kumar Bhaduri)