

# The 27th Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation

The 27th Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation (MED 2019) was held July 1–4, 2019, at the Palm Beach Hotel in Akko, Israel. This year's event provided an intimate setting that allowed for engaging talks and heated discussions. The conference covered a wide range of topics under the broad umbrella of systems and control theory, with contributions from both academia and industry. Conference highlights included three engaging keynote presentations and an interactive roundtable discussion. The general chairs for MED 2019 were Tal Shima and Zalman J. Palmor of the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa. MED is the annual conference of the Mediterranean Control Association (MCA), with Panos Antsaklis serving as the current president.

## TECHNICAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The technical program was overseen by Leonid Mirkin and Daniel Zelazo of the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology. In response to the call for papers, we received 128 contributed and 20 invited papers organized in three invited session proposals, for a grand total of 148 submissions. Authors of submitted papers came from 21 countries, with leading numbers of submissions from Israel, Germany, and India. All of these submissions went through a rigorous peer-review process, which was supervised by the members of the International Program Committee (IPC). As a result of this process, 93 contributed and 13 invited papers were accepted for presentation. The total number of registered participants was 177. The papers covered subjects from fundamental issues in linear and nonlinear systems to various applications of control engineering, including networked

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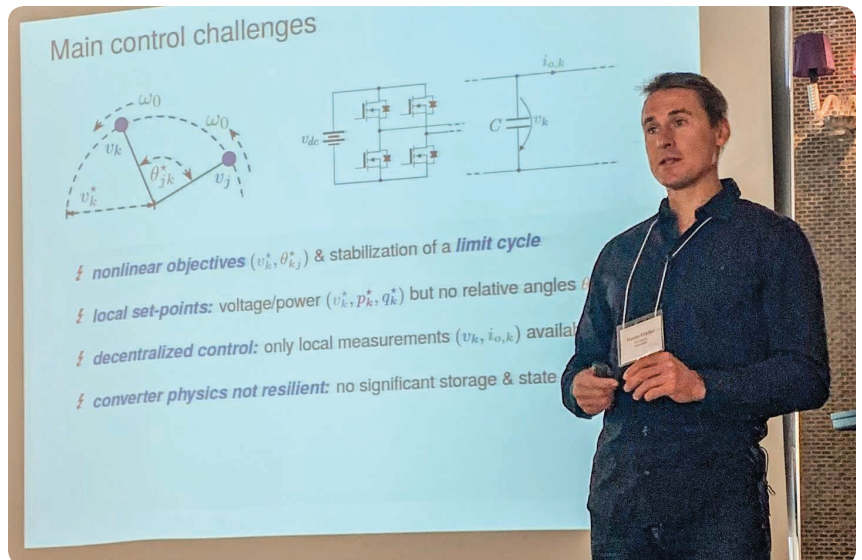
and multiagent systems, guidance and navigation, and automotive systems, among others.

Highlights of the program included plenary talks on each day of the conference. The first day featured “Electrical Excitation in Biological Cells: A Case for Control-Oriented Modeling,” by

Shimon Marom from the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology. On the second day, Florian Dörfler from ETH Zürich, Switzerland, gave his talk, “Control of Power Converters in Low-Inertia Power Systems.” The speaker on the last day was Martina Maggio from Lund University, who



The conference venue provided beautiful views of the ancient city of Akko.



Florian Dörfler discusses the control of power converters for low-inertia power systems.

presented “Feedback Control for Predictable Cloud Computing.” Their leitmotif was the impact that systems and control ideas have in other communities, specifically in physiology, power systems, and cloud computing. The technical program also included a roundtable panel session, “Data-Driven Control,” which is an emerging research area amalgamating ideas from control and computer sciences.

We are indebted to the IPC members and the reviewers; without their tireless work and commitment we could not have put together such an event, given the tight time window from submission to decision. A special thanks to Tal Shima and Moshe Idan for their assistance in reviewing the IPC recommendations and building the program. Our thanks also go to Pradeep Misra for his assistance with the paper submission process.

## SOCIAL PROGRAM

The welcome reception took place on the eve of the conference, on the conference hotel lawn on the Mediterranean beach, facing the old city and port of the Crusades city Akko. The evening was surprisingly cool after a hot day, and a mild breeze spread the tones of Eran Vertzberger’s internationally featured jazz band (<https://soundcloud.com/vertzeran>). The conference participants greeted each other by clinking glasses

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filled with chilled Chardonnay from our official winery, Bravdo (<http://www.bravdo.co.il/the-wine/Chardonnay%202018>). The hotel chef served exquisite tidbits of sushi, grilled skewers, and other delicacies.

The first conference day concluded with a two-hour guided walking tour in Akko led by the famed storyteller Abdu and two of his colleagues. We met them at the unique Tunisian synagogue after a 20-min walk from the conference hotel on the newly constructed beach promenade. We were told about Napoleon’s failed siege of Akko in 1799 as we walked the ramparts that stopped his army, and we saw a soccer match between two youth teams on a field that was built between the ramparts. We visited the entrance of the Crusader Fortress and peeked into an Ottoman khan, or caravanserai (<http://www.akko.org.il/en/>).

The conference banquet on the evening of the second day (held on the hotel lawn) was a great event. It was a sit-down dinner with a gourmet

buffet prepared by the hotel chef that included Mediterranean-style fish, lamb, vegetables, fresh fruit, Middle Eastern pastry, and espresso coffee. The wine was Bravdo Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon, in unlimited quantities, and the entertainment was provided by the stunning soprano Keren Hadar (<http://www.keren-hadar.com/video>).

The farewell event, held during lunch of the final day, was a gloomy affair, as nobody wanted to leave—there was so much science left to be done in Akko. However, we courageously continued to drink wine, greet each other, and express gratitude to everybody who contributed.

## ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

MED 2019 was organized and sponsored by the MCA and the Israeli Association for Automatic Control. The conference was technically cosponsored by the IEEE Control Systems Society and the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society. MED 2019 is also indebted to its gold sponsors, including the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology, Israel Aerospace Industries, RAFAEL Advance Defense Systems, Ltd., the Bernard M. Gordon Center for System Engineering at the Technion, and the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research.

## NEXT CONFERENCE

MED 2020 will take place in Saint-Raphael, in the south of France, June 16–19, 2020. Visit the conference website at <http://med2020.cran.univ-lorraine.fr> for more information.



(From left) Florian Dörfler, Yishay Mansour, Arie Feuer, and Panos Antsaklis engage in a roundtable on data-driven control.

Daniel Zelazo