Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues and friends,

My name is Sebastian Drude, and in the name of the Max-Planck-Institute for Psycholinguistics, in the name of the steering committee of CLARIN-D, the German Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure, and last but not least in the name of the M24 preparation group, I welcome you all to the CLARIN-D Month 24 Workshop in Nijmegen.

We welcome in particular those who are not themselves members of any of the several organs of this infrastructure in construction, but who accompany and support CLARIN-D; either by funding it – Dr. Kahler will join us later –, or by administering it – Mr. Nerlich is here for the DLR – or by giving their external advice. Some of you have come from afar and have even crossed an ocean to be here with us today. Thank you all for making this effort.

Most of us, however, contribute to CLARIN in our daily work, in one of the CLARIN-D-Centres or computational centres, in one of the discipline-specific working groups, or in one of the so-called curation projects – we all ARE CLARIN-D, this is OUR event.

This meeting at the end of the second year of CLARIN-D gives all of us the opportunity to get a general overview over CLARIN-D and more detailed information about its current state. This year, the focus of these two days is on the backbone of CLARIN-D, on the technical infrastructure.

That is also the reason why we invited you to this somewhat remote place in the Netherlands, because the respective Work-Package 3 is led by The Language Archive, a unit of the Max-Planck-Institute for Psycholinguistics here in Nijmegen. Many of you will know our Senior Advisor, Peter Wittenburg, for many years the head of the Technical Group of this Institute, who not only built up The Language Archive,
but who is also one of the persons who first envisaged a Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure for Europe. Peter cannot be here with us today, but he sends us his warmest greetings from the even more abstract spheres, like the Research Data Alliance, where he circulates these days.

Today, we will show to you how the infrastructure is being built in Germany, overall and at each of the participating nine centres, which just recently gained the status of “B-Centres” by the European CLARIN, which less than a year ago itself gained the official status of a European Research Infrastructure, or ERIC – which gives me the opportunity to also welcome Dr. Stephen Krawer, the executive director of the CLARIN-ERIC.

We will also show you today how the discipline specific working groups contribute, in particular in the curation projects. Tomorrow, we will demonstrate the high potential of the infrastructure in several showcases, which are useful already today, after only two years of a total of originally planned five years of construction.

Hopefully, this meeting will contribute in two respects to make our work worthwhile to be remembered even in decades from now, two aspects that will define the future of this infrastructure. One aspect is the uptake, the actual usage, the visibility of the contribution of the infrastructure to future humanities research. The other aspect is, of course, its sustainability in terms of a long-term operation model and of funding, for the years to come.

Before I hand over the word to the coordinator of CLARIN-D, Erhard Hinrichs, who will give an overview over CLARIN-D in the European context, and who will present the program in more detail, I would like to make the following practical announcements: