# Embedded Software Development 2025.09.22.

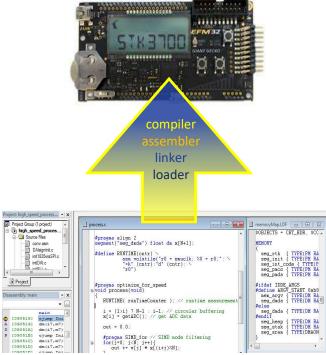
#### SW development environment, compiler





### SW development environment

- IDE: Integrated Development Environment
- Duty of SW development environment:
  - Gives a frame for the available toolchains (program modules), like:
    - Compiler: generates low level assembly code from high level code
    - Assembler: generates machine code from low level assembly code
    - Linker: merge the numerous compilation files
  - Compilation
  - Debug
  - "Texting": assistance in writing the code
    - code highlighting
    - automatic completion
    - tracking functions and definition of variables
    - ...

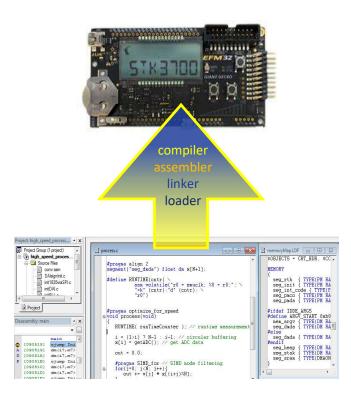






### SW development environment

- Duty of SW development environment (cont'd):
  - Handling/storing project settings
  - Downloading and running the program
  - Handling the connected embedded HW systems
  - Intelligent handling of error messages
  - Setting up the HW configuration







# SW development environments for embedded systems

- Not easy to provide comprehensive summary since unlike PC approach, in the embedded field many processors and platforms and so many development environments exist
  - Special features → special compilers
  - Different architectures and instruction set
- Debugging is difficult since the processor is an autonomous unit that cannot be accessed directly by PC
- Relationship between the compiler and the graphical user interface (GUI):
  - Compiler (and other supplementary program tools) and the GUI build up a complex system (e.g. provided by the manufacturer)
  - General toolchain (e.g. gcc compiler) + editor (e.g. Eclipse env.)





### An example: Simplicity Studio

- SW development environment in the course:
   Silicon Laboratories (SiLabs): Simplicity Studio
- Architecture:
  - Eclipse-based GUI
  - gcc-based compiler
  - GUI helps in exploiting the services offered by the compiler





### Compilation steps

- Source codes in C → Assembly code/object file
- Assembly code → object file
  - object file: the file compiled into a machine code + extra auxiliary information for the linker
- Linker: integrates object files
  - Generating the whole machine code from the program
  - Based on the auxiliary information places real addresses in the code (e.g. resolving function- or variable links from different C-language files)
  - Storing variables and functions in the memory
    - Linker file contains information of which variable stored into which segment of the memory





### Compilation steps

- Typical 'intercompilation' files containing auxiliary information:
  - i: file processed by the preprocessor (e.g. substitution of #define-s)
  - o.s:asm file
  - o .o : object file
  - .d: file containing dependencies (e.g. main.c file contains init.c)
  - axf: (ARM) object file containing (among others) debug information
  - o .map: memory map
- Final result of the compilation: files that can be loaded on the embedded unit, e.g. development board (.hex, .bin, ...)





### Compilation process example

- Example: handling buttons:
  - Inintialization
  - Read button state, setting LED
  - LED blinks repeatedly
- Files:
  - main.c
  - initDevice\_man.c
  - reg\_defs.h
  - startup\_gcc\_efm32gg.s
     (startup code:
     provided by the
     manufacturer for
     initialization purposes)

```
c main.c 🔀
                                                       c initDevice man.c X
                                            1 #include "reg defs.h"
     #include "reg defs.h"
                                            2
     int buttons;
                                            3@ woid initDevice(void){
     int LED blink cntr = 0;
                                                   // set RC oscillator frequency
                                                   CMU HFRCOCTRL &= ~(0x7<<HFRCO BAND); // era
    extern void initDevice(void);
                                            6
                                                   CMU HFRCOCTRL = (HFRCO 7MHZ<<HFRCO BAND);
                                            7
  8= int main(void)
                                            8
                                                   // enable GPIO peripheral clock
  9
                                            9
                                                   CMU HFPERCLKENØ |= 1<<GPIO clk;
 10
         int cntr;
                                           10
 11
         initDevice();
                                           11
                                                   // set IO port
 12
                                           12
                                                   GPIO PE MODEL |= GPIO PUSHPULL << MODE2;
 13
         while (1) {
                                           13
                                                   GPIO PE MODEL |= GPIO PUSHPULL << MODE3;
 14
                                           14
 15
            buttons = GPIO PB DIN;
                                           15
                                                   GPIO PE CTRL |= 0;
 16
             if (buttons & (1<<10)){
                                           16
 17
                 GPIO PE DOUTSET = LED0;
                                           17
                                                   // set IO port
 18
                                           18
                                                   GPIO PB MODEH |= GPIO_INPUT << MODE9;
 19
                 GPIO PE DOUTCLR = LED0;
                                           19
                                                   GPIO PB MODEH |= GPIO_INPUT << MODE10;
 20
                                           20
 21
                                           21
 22
             LED blink cntr++;
                                           22
             if (LED blink cntr>40000L){
 23
                                           23
                                                   GPIO PE DOUTSET = LED0;
                 GPIO PE DOUTTGL = LED1;
 24
                                           24
                                                   GPIO PE DOUTSET = LED1;
                 LED blink cntr = 0;
 25
                                           25 }
 26
                                           26
 27
 28 }
```





# Compilation process example

```
CDT Build Console [Simple_Manual_Compile]
      18:38:47 **** Build of configuration GNU ARM v4.9.3 - Debug for project Simple Manual Compile ****
      make -j4 all
      Building file: ../src/initDevice man.c
      Building file: ../CMSIS/EFM32GG/startup gcc efm32gg.s
      Building file: ../src/main.c
      Invoking: GNU ARM C Compiler Compiling C-language files
      Invoking: GNU ARM C Compiler
      Invoking: GNU ARM Assembler
      arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99 '-DDEBUG=1' '-DEFM32GG990F1024=1' -I"D:\MyInstall D\Si.
      arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99 '-DDEBUG=1' '-DEFM32GG990F1024=1' -I"D:\MyInstall D\Si:
      arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -c -x assembler-with-cpp '-DEFM32GG990F1024=1' -o "CMSIS/EFM32GG
      ../src/main.c: In function 'main':
      ../src/main.c:10:6: warning: unused variable 'cntr' [-Wunused-variable]
                         - Compiling ASM file
      Finished building: ../CMSIS/EFM32GG/startup gcc efm32gg.s
      Finished building: ../src/main.c
      Finished building: ../src/initDevice man.c
Linker
      Building target: Simple Manual Compile.axf
      Invoking: GNU ARM C Linker
     arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -T "Simple Manual Compile.ld" -Xlinker --gc-sections -Xlinker -/
      Finished building target: Simple_Manual_Compile.axf
 Generating file to be loaded on embedded unit
      Building hex file: Simple_Manual_Compile.hex
      arm-none-eabi-objcopy -O ihex "Simple Manual Compile.axf" "Simple Manual Compile.hex"
      Running size tool
      arm-none-eabi-size "Simple Manual Compile.axf"
                 data
                          bss
                                  dec
                                          hex filename
         text
          892
                  108
                                 1036
                                          40c Simple Manual Compile.axf
```





# 'Manual' compilation

#### Let us be a 'manual' compiler

SET COMP="d:\MyInstall\_D\SiliconLabs\SimplicityStudio\developer\toolchains\gnu\_arm\4.9\_2015q3\bin\,, Compilation of C files:

%COMP%arm-none-eabi-gcc

- -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99
- -D DEBUG=1 -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 -I ./src
- -O0 -Wall -c -fmessage-length=0 -mno-sched-prolog -fno-builtin -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections
- -MMD -MP -MF"initDevice man.d" -MT"initDevice man.o"
- -o "initDevice\_man.o" "initDevice\_man.c,,

#### %COMP%arm-none-eabi-gcc

- -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99
- -D DEBUG=1 -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 -I ./src
- -O0 -Wall -c -fmessage-length=0 -mno-sched-prolog -fno-builtin -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections
- -MMD -MP -MF"main.d" -MT"main.o"
- -o "main.o" "main.c,,

#### **Compilation of ASM file:**

- -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -c -x assembler-with-cpp
- -D EFM32GG990F1024=1
- -o "startup gcc efm32gg.o" "startup gcc efm32gg.s"





# 'Manual' compilation

#### Let us be a 'manual' compiler

#### Linking:

%COMP%arm-none-eabi-gcc

- -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb
- -T "Simple Manual Compile.ld" -Xlinker --gc-sections -Xlinker -Map="Simple Manual Compile.map"
- --specs=nano.specs
- -o Simple Manual Compile.axf
- "startup gcc efm32gg.o" "main.o" "initDevice man.o"
- -WI,--start-group -lgcc -lc -lnosys -WI,--end-group

#### Generating the file to be downloaded to the embedded device

%COMP%arm-none-eabi-objcopy -O ihex "Simple\_Manual\_Compile.axf" "Simple\_Manual\_Compile.hex"

#### **Calculating size:**

%COMP%arm-none-eabi-size "Simple\_Manual\_Compile.axf"

#### **Generating dissassemby file:**

%COMP%arm-none-eabi-objdump -S --disassemble Simple\_Manual\_Compile.axf > Simple\_Manual\_Compile.dump





# Meaning of compile switches (C compiler)

- -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99
- -D DEBUG=1 -DBLINK DELAY=4000L -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 -I ./src
- -OO -Wall -c -fmessage-length=0 -mno-sched-prolog -fno-builtin -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections
- -MMD -MP -MF"initDevice\_man.d" -MT"initDevice\_man.o"
- -o "initDevice\_man.o" "initDevice\_man.c,,
- -g -gdwarf-2: saving debug information into dwarf-2 format
- -D DEBUG=1 –D BLINK\_DELAY=4000L -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 : as if these variables have been given by #define in all our program files. By this, conditional compilation or general parameters can be given, e.g. type of processor
- I./src: libraries can be given where to search for included files
- -mcpu=cortex-m3: type of CPU for which the compilation is done
- -mthumb: thumb instruction set (16-bit reduced instruction set)
- -std=c99: the C-language standard used
- -O0: optimization level: 0, no optimization
  - o Possible levels: 00...03, Os: optimization for size
- -Wall -c -fmessage-length=0: all warnings are on, messages are not truncated (instead of 0 truncation length can be given)





# Meaning of compile switches (C compiler)

```
-g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99
-D DEBUG=1 -DBLINK_DELAY=4000L -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 -I ./src
-O0 -Wall -c -fmessage-length=0 -mno-sched-prolog -fno-builtin -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections
-MMD -MP -MF"initDevice_man.d" -MT"initDevice_man.o"
-o "initDevice_man.o" "initDevice_man.c,"
```

- -mno-sched-prolog: in case of functions their header (stack pointer handling, parameter handling...) is coded separately in a non-optimized manner, not included into the function body -> easier to read and debug the assembly code
- -fno-builtin: the embedded C-language functions are not optimized but appears
  in the compiled code -> easier to read and debug the assembly code
- -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections: the compiler will not mix the data and the program but they are stored in dedicated memory segments -> easier to debug
- -MMD -MP -MF"initDevice\_man.d" -MT"initDevice\_man.o,: generate the dependency structure of files and saves it into a file with extension of .d (e.g. which file uses variables and functions of other files)
  - Example: content of main.d: src/main.o: ../src/main.c ../src/reg\_defs.h
- -o "initDevice\_man.o" "initDevice\_man.c,,: from initDevice\_man.c file initDevice\_man.o output object file if generated





# Meaning of compile switches (linker)

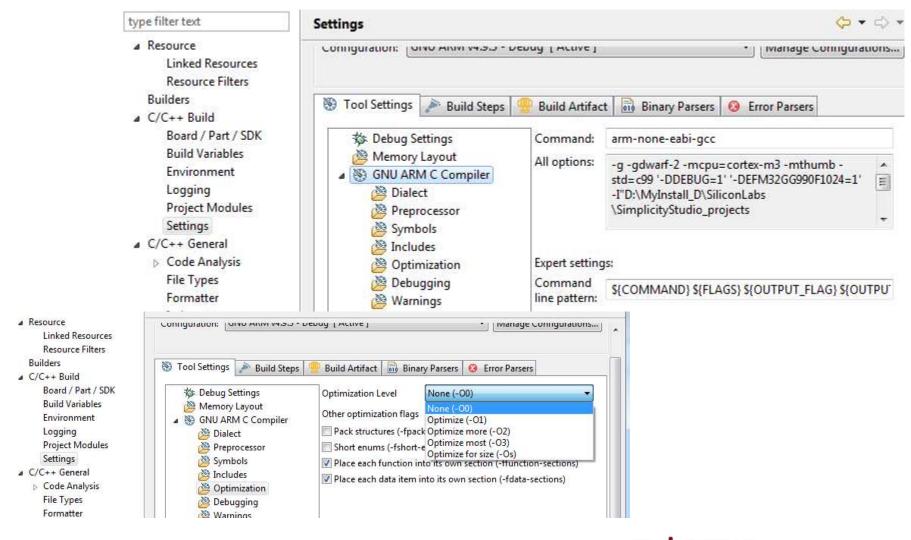
- -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb
- -T "Simple Manual Compile.ld" -Xlinker --gc-sections -Xlinker -Map="Simple Manual Compile.map"
- --specs=nano.specs
- -o Simple Manual Compile.axf
- "startup gcc efm32gg.o" "main.o" "initDevice man.o"
- -WI,--start-group -lgcc -lc -lnosys -WI,--end-group
- -T "Simple\_Manual\_Compile.ld,,: linker file. This file defines at which memory address the data program code should be stored. The memory can be segmented into more parts
- -Xlinker: the command followed by this switch is passed to the linker
- -Xlinker --gc-sections: tries to leave out the non-used functions (only if they are compiled using switches -ffunction-sections and -fdata-sections)
- -Xlinker -Map="Simple\_Manual\_Compile.map,": providing map file
- --specs=nano.specs: special command file given to the linker
- -o Simple\_Manual\_Compile.axf: output file
- "startup\_gcc\_efm32gg.o" "main.o" "initDevice\_man.o,: these files are linked into a single source file
- -WI,--start-group -lgcc -lc -lnosys -WI,--end-group: not interested for us





# Setting of compile switches

Development environ. generates appropriate switches







### Standard configurations

- Generally standard configurations exist, typically:
  - Debug: for development
    - Contains more debug information, code can be read better, using switch -mno-sched-prolog
  - Release: final product

Debug:

-g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99 '-DDEBUG=1' '-DEFM32GG990F1024=1' -O0 -Wall

-c -fmessage-length=0 -c -save-temps -mno-sched-prolog -fno-builtin -ffunction-sections -fdata-

sections

Saves temporary files

as well (e.g.assembly)

Keep the function header in one piece

#### Release:

-g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99 '-DNDEBUG=1' '-DEFM32GG990F1024=1' -O3 -Wall

-c -fmessage-length=0 -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections





No optimization

# Configuration of compiler in source code

- #pragma directive: giving compiler specific settings
- #pragma GCC optimize("O3")
  - Setting optimization level for a certain code segment
- #pragma optimize for speed
  - E.g. Analog Devices DSP-s: a kind of optimization again
- #pragma SIMD\_for
  - Where SIMD (Single Instruction Multiple Dada) is applicable
- #pragma message "message" -> e.g. "it needs more development"
  - Writes a message during compilation
- #pragma push → #pragma pop: saving and fetching the settings
- #pragma once: the header file is included only once





### Development-compiler relationship

- Development environment and compiler are two separated SW units
- Theoretically the same rules are applied for both but inconsistencies may occur
  - Example:
    - development environment finds and error (uint32 cannot be resolved) but
    - the compiler compiles the project without even a warning

```
7
8 [Type 'uint32_t' could not be resolved] optimization is (
9 uint32_t GPIO_IF_value_copy;
volatile uint32_t x_add=0x08, y_add=0x10;
```

```
Running size tool
arm-none-eabi-size "Konfig_proba.axf"
text data bss dec hex filename
5700 128 40 5868 16ec Konfig_proba.axf

08:32:49 Build Finished (took 4s.520ms)
```





### Automatic compilation

- Many compiler use command make
  - Originally developed for UNIX system as an auxiliary program (used since 1976)
  - Can be used for automate compilation (or in other cases, generally when files has to be generated from other files based on certain rules, e.g. automatic program installation)
  - The makefile contains compilation rules
  - The compiler calls the *make* program that search for the *make file* of the project. Based on the rules found in the makefile, the source code is compiled and files are generated.
  - Make command has switches, e.g. –jN, N: number of processes run parallel (like in Simplicity Studio)
- The standardized structure makes possible the use of the same compiler for various graphical development environment or even the manual compilation





#### structure of makefile

- The makefile contains rules
- Structure of rules (dependencies)

```
target file: precondition(s)
instruction(s) [starts with a Tab]
```

#### Example:

```
main.o: main.c

gcc -o main.o main.c
```

The main.o file depends on main.c file (generated from that). A main.o file is generated by using command gcc

- Instruction(s) are executed if:
  - If the target file still not exists
  - The program checks the dates of target and precondition files in the dependencies. Instructions are executed only if precondition files are generated later than the target files
    - Checking dates saves time by not performing unnecessary compilation





#### 'manual' makefile

#### Compilation of previous example given in makefile

```
#giving the path of compiler COMP in a variable. Later can be used $COMP$ as a reference of the compiler
COMP := d:\MyInstall D\SiliconLabs\SimplicityStudio\developer\toolchains\gnu arm\4.9 2015q3\bin\\
#all: default target. Final file is axf file
all: Simple_Manual_Compile.axf
#First dependence: what is needed for generating Simple Manual Compile.axf file:
#If files with .o extensions are not available then based on the applicable rules those are generated (see next page)
Simple_Manual_Compile.axf: startup_gcc_efm32gg.o main.o initDevice_man.o
            @echo ' '#@echo: writing text
            @echo 'Simple Manual Compile.axf compilation'
            # link command is given here (see previous example)
            $(COMP)arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -T Simple Manual Compile.ld
            -Xlinker --gc-sections -Xlinker -Map=Simple Manual Compile.map --specs=nano.specs
            -o Simple Manual Compile.axf startup gcc efm32gg.o main.o initDevice man.o -
            Wl,--start-group -lgcc -lc -lnosys -Wl,--end-group
            # hex file generation
            $(COMP)arm-none-eabi-objcopy -O ihex Simple Manual Compile.axf Simple Manual Compile.hex
```



# this is a comment



### 'manual' makefile

```
# cont.
```

```
# startup gcc efm32gg.s compilation by assembler. Generation of the startup gcc efm32gg.o file.
startup_gcc_efm32gg.o: startup_gcc_efm32gg.s
            @echo''
            @echo 'startup gcc efm32gg.s compilation'
            $(COMP)arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -c -x assembler-with-cpp
            -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 -o startup_gcc_efm32gg.o startup_gcc_efm32gg.s
# Compilation of C-language files \rightarrow generation of object files (compilation parameters are found in the previous
example)
main.o: main.c
            @echo''
            @echo 'main.c compilation'
            $(COMP)arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99 -D DEBUG=1
            -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 -O0 -Wall -c -fmessage-length=0 -mno-sched-prolog -fno-builtin
            -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections -MMD -MP -MFmain.d -MTmain.o -o main.o main.c
initDevice_man.o: initDevice_man.c
            @echo''
            @echo 'initDevice man.c compilation'
            $(COMP)arm-none-eabi-gcc -g -gdwarf-2 -mcpu=cortex-m3 -mthumb -std=c99 -D DEBUG=1
            -D EFM32GG990F1024=1 -O0 -Wall -c -fmessage-length=0 -mno-sched-prolog -fno-builtin
            -ffunction-sections -fdata-sections -MMD -MP -MFinitDevice man.d -MTinitDevice man.o
            -o initDevice man.o initDevice man.c
```





#### structure of makefile

- Previous examples are 'simple'. Make program includes many parameters, it has automatic variables, using them results compact but hard-to-understand rules.:
  - \$\omega\$: name of target
  - \$<: list of preconditions</p>
  - Extension-based rules, example: generate every c file into object file:
    - .c.o: gcc \$< -o\$@
  - Pattern matching (%: all non-zero string):
    - %.o: %.c gcc \$< -o\$@
- Variables in the program can be accessed between \$\$. Example:
  - O PATH=C:\MCU\
  - \$PATH\$header.h → C:\MCU\header.h





### Basic properties of make

- Typical targets: all, clean
  - all: compilation of everything (see previous examples)
  - clean: delete generated files. Worth to use it when something behaves in a strange manner, e.g. a file has been modified but the consequences cannot be seen.
    - example:

clean:

rm \*.c \*.o Simple\_Manual\_Compile.axf

- PHONY: all clean dependents
  - Indicates that these are not real targets, therefore no need to generate 'all' file
- Some variables are declared implicitly, like:
  - \$(CC): C compiler
  - \$(CFLAGS): parameters of C compiler
  - \$(LDFLAGS): linker flags
  - \$(RM): remove command





# Makefile hierarchy of template project

- Editing makefile manually is extremely rare since in most cases it is generated by the development environment.
- Example: makefile hierarchy of template project
  - The makefile found in the source library includes other makefiles that are necessary for the compilation of other files of the project
- See some example of makefiles in a simplified form (some parts are ignored for better understanding)





# makefile (automatically generated)

# Automatically-generated file. Do not edit!

-include ../makefile.init

RM := rm - rf

#### # All of the sources participating in the build are defined here

- -include sources.mk
- -include src/subdir.mk
- -include CMSIS/EFM32GG/subdir.mk
- -include subdir.mk
- -include objects.mk

-include ../makefile.defs

Including makefiles that belong other source files of the project





# makefile (automatically generated)

#### # All Target

all: Simple Manual Compile.axf

#### # Tool invocations

```
Rule for .axf file: generated from what object
Simple Manual Compile.axf: $(OBJS) $(USER OBJS)
                                                                     files and how (switches are ignored for better
            @echo 'Building target: $@'
                                                                      understanding)
            @echo 'Invoking: GNU ARM C Linker'
            arm-none-eabi-gcc[...comp. switches...]Simple Manual Compile.axf "./CMSIS/EFM32GG/startup gcc efm32gg.o"
            "./src/initDevice man.o" "./src/main.o...
            @echo 'Finished building target: $@'
            @echo''
            @echo 'Building hex file: Simple Manual Compile.hex'
            arm-none-eabi-objcopy -O ihex "Simple Manual Compile.axf" "Simple_Manual_Compile.hex"
            @echo''
            @echo 'Running size tool'
            arm-none-eabi-size "Simple Manual Compile.axf"
            @echo''
```

#### **# Other Targets**

clean:

-\$(RM) \$(EXECUTABLES)\$(OBJS)\$(C\_DEPS) Simple\_Manual\_Compile.axf -@echo''

Deleting all files: executed when Clean Project is called





### Example for an included file (subdir.mk)

```
# Automatically-generated file. Do not edit!
# Add inputs and outputs from these tool invocations to the build variables
C_SRCS += \../src/initDevice_man.c \../src/main.c
OBJS += \./src/initDevice man.o \./src/main.o
C DEPS += \./src/initDevice man.d \./src/main.d
# Each subdirectory must supply rules for building sources it contributes
src/initDevice man.o: ../src/initDevice man.c
           @echo 'Building file: $<'
           @echo 'Invoking: GNU ARM C Compiler' arm-none-eabi-gcc [... comp. switches ...] -o "$@" "$<"
                                                                   Rule for the compilation of
                                                                   initDevice man.c file
           @echo 'Finished building: $<'
           @echo''
src/main.o: ../src/main.c
           @echo 'Building file: $<'
           @echo 'Invoking: GNU ARM C Compiler'
                                                                   Rule for the compilation of main.c file
           arm-none-eabi-gcc [... comp. switches ...] $@" "$<"
           @echo 'Finished building: $<'
           @echo''
```





# GCC compiler manual (.pdf)

- Search the internet for GCC.pdf to find the comprehensive description of the GCC compiler
- Example: See below the explanation of C language versions:

#### 2 Language Standards Supported by GCC

For each language compiled by GCC for which there is a standard, GCC attempts to follow one or more versions of that standard, possibly with some exceptions, and possibly with some extensions.

#### 2.1 C Language

The original ANSI C standard (X3.159-1989) was ratified in 1989 and published in 1990. This standard was ratified as an ISO standard (ISO/IEC 9899:1990) later in 1990. There were no technical differences between these publications, although the sections of the ANSI standard were renumbered and became clauses in the ISO standard. The ANSI standard, but not the ISO standard, also came with a Rationale document. This standard, in both its forms, is commonly known as C89, or occasionally as C90, from the dates of ratification. To select this standard in GCC, use one of the options -ansi, -std=c90 or -std=iso9899:1990; to obtain all the diagnostics required by the standard, you should also specify -pedantic (or -pedantic-errors if you want them to be errors rather than warnings). See Section 3.4 [Options Controlling C Dialect], page 42.

Errors in the 1990 ISO C standard were corrected in two Technical Corrigenda published in 1994 and 1996. GCC does not support the uncorrected version.



