Closing Ceremony

Address by Sebastià Xambó
President of Societat Catalana de Matemàtiques and
Chair of the Organising Committee

Ladies and gentlemen,

First let me introduce the members of the presidential table: Rolf Jeltsch, President of the European Mathematical Society, and the members of the Executive Committee of the Congress: Marta Sanz, Secretary of Organisation; Rosa Maria Miró-Roig, vicepresident and in charge of Programming and Activities; Carles Casacuberta, for Publications and Communications; Julià Cufí, for Finances; and Marta València, for Infrastructure.

To begin, I would like to remind you of the main goals we envisioned for the Congress:

• To present new results to a wide audience, in the spirit of the unity of mathematics.
• To be a forum for the relations of mathematics with society.
• To foster cooperation among mathematicians.

On behalf of the Organising Committee, I am happy to say that we believe these objectives have been met.

It has been a truly international event, for there have been participants of 87 countries. The official participation is the following: there have been 1240 registered people and 130 volunteers.

As you have certainly seen, the lectures, mini-symposia, round tables and other activities have had a high quality for this kind of conference and you have seen the people talking and discussing in the halls and stands during all the week. Moreover, the computer area has been quite busy all the time.

As far as the image in the society at large, there has been some coverage in the press, interviews on TV and several radio programmes. I believe that these activities, together with all the activities developed in the frame of World Mathematical Year, have promoted, in our country, the image that mathematics is important for everybody, and not only for professional mathematicians. You possibly are witnesses of the posters and TV displays in the subway, and I would like to say that the Parliament of Catalonia organised, on June 19th, a special session to celebrate World Mathematical Year. In particular, there were two round tables, one on the present state of mathematics in Catalonia, including its teaching, and another on the theme of “Mathematics as a key for development”.

I also hope that the Congress conveyed you a sharper image of our mathematical community, that we have managed to communicate you a realistic view of the quantity
and quality of our mathematical community, including the very young students and volunteers that you have seen in action those days. If you report on the Congress, we would like to hear about it. For us, the 3ecm is not over, as we have to close the proceedings, the financial matters and all the thank-you correspondence to all people and institutions that have helped us. When we do this, it would be much valuable if we could add your points of view.

We want to express our deepest thanks to all the speakers, and also to all the chairmen of lectures, round tables and mini-symposia. In the case of mini-symposia, it is to be acknowledged that they had a particularly difficult task, for they had to invite the corresponding speakers, coordinate their contributions and chair all the sessions.

Their works will be recorded in the proceedings, which will be published by Birkhäuser as in the previous two European Congresses. I would like to remind you that the discount offered by Birkhäuser to the participants will be valid until the end of July.

I would also like to remind you that the discount offered by Springer-Verlag on the Video and Multimedia at 3ecm (in video and DVD formats) is valid until the end of August.

The efforts of the round table chairmen and panelists will also be recorded into one volume, published jointly by the Catalan Mathematical Society and the International Center for Numerical Methods in Engineering. To get a copy, you should get in touch with the Catalan Mathematical Society.

Finally, a few words of thanks.

I would like to stress the crucial role played by the public universities in the Barcelona area. We are much indebted to them for their explicit financial support. Moreover, the Universitat de Barcelona, the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (the three universities that offer degrees in mathematics) have contributed substantial human resources, as they have permitted the members of the committees and groups to work for 3ecm.

To end, I would like to thank all the volunteers for the wonderful job they did. Here is a paragraph of an e-mail that I received this morning from a participant: “Considering the numerous participants, they were of much help to keep everything going and thus particularly long queues could be avoided. Also the high number of young Spanish students who were present impressed me”. I think that they deserve a big applause.

And the same gratefulness goes to the Organising Committee and all persons that served on support committees, for whom I also would like to ask a big applause.

The last applause I would like to ask you, but certainly not the smallest, is for all the staff that has made possible running smoothly the 3ecm.

Shaping the 21st Century?

Palau de Congressos de Barcelona
July 14th, 2000
Presidential Table at the Closing Ceremony