

Editorial

It is with great pleasure and pride that I am writing this editorial, the last issue of "Highlights" prior to the XXth ISPRS Congress in Istanbul between 12-23 July 2004. When the delegates to the Amsterdam Congress gave us the honour to hold the Congress in Istanbul, I realised that what lay ahead for us was four years of hard work based on co-operation between academics, practitioners and service staff both in Turkey and worldwide.

I strongly believe that this co-operation and consultation has been the foundation stone for what I am sure will be a most successful congress. Let me illustrate this by one single numeric example. We have received a record number of abstracts, to wit 1848. Should any further proof be required, I can quote the number of visits to our web-site up to the time of writing as being over 33,000. Furthermore, as Congress Director, I have attended numerous conferences and symposiums promoting the XXth ISPRS Congress.

In September, we, as the Turkish Organising Committee, attended the INTERGEO Fair for the second time promoting the ISPRS exhibition possibilities. It is with great pleasure that we would inform you that in view of the increased interest and demand for space, we have relocated the venue for the poster session, adding the newly vacated area to the exhibition area. Currently nearly all of the available stands have been booked.

The CIPA Symposium dealing with recording and documenting of the cultural heritage through the application of photogrammetry and sciences, was held in Antalya between 30 September – 04 October 2003. The symposium was attended by over 200 participants and to the best of my knowledge, met with the approval of those who attended.

Though some may consider it to be slightly premature, I would like to use this opportunity to record my sincere thanks to all the staff and colleagues who have over the past four year worked selflessly to ensure that this congress achieves the success that we have envisaged for it.

In this day and age, terrorism and its terrible consequences can never be far from our minds. In this respect, may I assure you that all sections of the state administration are fully cognisant of these dangers and are continuously taking all the necessary precautions to assure our safety.

One of the most important aspects of such scientific congresses such as ours is the appeal to the younger generation of scientists who will take up the direction of scientific research and carry it a stage further. In planning the XXth Congress of the ISPRS, we have made this one of our main aims by providing more economic accommodation and lower registration fees for the scientific leaders of tomorrow in the field of photogrammetry. We are pleased to inform you that as of now, we have had positive reactions to our offer and we hope to have a fair number of young scientists at our Congress.

As regards international co-operation for the advancement of photogrammetry and remote sensing, we are pleased to see from the registrations to date that we shall be having delegations from 80 countries. It is our aim to provide the necessary environment conducive to the interchange of ideas and applications and in this respect you need not have any misgivings. Both the formal and informal sessions should provide a suitable occasion for human contacts as well as the interchange of ideas.

A congress held in a country other than one's own means that one is given the opportunity to see and get to know a different country and culture. In this age of constant international cross fertilisation, a visit to Turkey, the host country should provide everybody with the opportunity to see some of the world famous archaeological sites covering many civilisations. Though the numerous museums within Istanbul will provide a preview of what is to be seen in sites across Anatolia, we would strongly recommend that you avail yourselves of the opportunity of registering for one of the many tours planned by our associate travel agency, Magister. Should archaeology not be within your sphere of interest, just seeing the physical aspects of our countryside should be a rewarding experience in itself.

Finally it remains for us to welcome you to the XXth Congress and hope that by your attendance, you will find the opportunity to put in as much as you take out of what we expect will be an enlightening congress as well as a great social occasion.

See you all in July in Istanbul !

M. Orhan Altan, Congress Director

