PREFACE

The IV International ADeLA (Astronomía Dinámica en Latinoamérica) Conference was sponsored by the Instituto de Astronomía (IAUNAM), the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), the El Colegio Nacional and the Centro de Radioastronomía y Astrofísica (CryA-UNAM).

The scientific organising committee was chaired by Christine Allen (Mexico), and included Carlos Abad (Venezuela), William van Altena (USA), Felicitas Arias (Argentina), Carlos López (Argentina), Claudio Mallamaci (Argentina), René Méndez (Chile), José Luis Muiños (Spain), Rosa Orellana (Argentina) and Ramachrisna Teixeira (Brazil).

The meeting took place between February 12 and February 16, 2008 at the Colegio Nacional located at the historical center of Mexico City in a building dating from the colonial days. The local organising committee was chaired by Christine Allen, and included Luis Aguilar, Fernando Angeles, Alfredo Díaz, Eduardo de la Fuente, Lila Perrilliat, Alex Ruelas, Leonardo Sánchez and Juan Carlos Yustis.

The meeting was attended by more than fifty people from nine different American and European countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, France, Mexico, Spain, United States and Venezuela). Continuing with the ADeLA tradition, papers belonging to all branches of dynamical astronomy and techniques related to it were presented, dealing all the way from astrometric determinations of parallaxes and proper motions and new techniques such as radio-astrometry and diffracto-astrometry to the dynamics of the central region of the Galaxy, globular clusters orbits and fundamental galactic constants.

The meeting was organised around eight invited talks, with contributed papers related to them presented either orally or as posters. Ample time was provided for poster viewing, and for discussion following each oral presentation. Carlos Abad (Venezuela) provided the closing remarks.

In connect with the meeting, two public lectures were offered, one by Luis Aguilar on the possible origin of the Moon, and one by Jesús Galindo on the archeoastronomy of the Templo Mayor. On a third evening we were offered an interesting concert consisting of music either composed by astronomers or dealing with astronomical subjects. We listened to compositions by Vincenzo Galilei (father of Galileo Galilei), William Herschel, and John Cage among others. This delightful concert was organised by Mario Lavista, one of the most distinguished Mexican composers, to whom we express our gratitude. One afternoon we took an extended bus tour of Mexico City and of the National University of Mexico (UNAM) and, in particular, of the Institute of Astronomy where we were offered a reception. On another afternoon we were given a specially guided tour of the Templo Mayor.

We would like to express our gratitude to all participants who provided the written accounts of their presentations, and to all those people and institutions whose support made the IV ADeLA Conference possible. We are particularly indebted to the personnel of El Colegio Nacional for their efforts –well beyond the call of duty– to ensure the smooth and pleasant run of the meeting.

Christine Allen, Alex Ruelas, and Ramachrisna Teixeira
Editors of the Proceedings