PREFACE

The XIII Latin American Regional Meeting of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) took place in the city of Morelia, Michoacán, Mexico, on November 8–12, 2010. The number of registered participants in the meeting was roughly 300, of whom more than half were either students, postdoctoral fellows or young astronomers from Latin American countries. Participants came from 16 different different countries: Argentina (27), Brazil (22), Chile (30), Colombia (5), Costa Rica (4), El Salvador (2), France (2), Germany (1), Honduras (1), Mexico (169), Puerto Rico (1), Spain (8), United States (5), United Kingdom (1), Uruguay (1) and Venezuela (15).

The meeting was held in the Morelia Convention Center, situated in the south of the city, next to the Fiesta Inn Hotel, where many of the participants stayed. The five-day long scientific program was organized into 8 plenary sessions and 24 parallel sessions. In the plenary sessions 12 invited review talks on topics of special interest and 10 invited oral contributions were delivered. In the parallel sessions, which took place simultaneously in 3 meeting rooms, a further 109 oral contributions were presented. In addition, 119 posters were exhibited over two sessions during the meeting. The main topics covered during the meeting represent the most active areas of research in Latin America: Cosmology; Galaxies (incuding AGNs); High Energy Astrophysics (including Cosmic Rays); Interstellar Medium; Stars, Stellar Systems and Star Formation; Planetary Systems; and Instrumentation. In addition, three public outreach talks were given in different locations in Morelia during the week of the meeting by distinguished science communicators from Argentina, Uruguay, and Venezuela. On Wednesday, many of the conference participants joined a tour that was organized to the nearby lakeside town of Pátzcuaro, famous for its furniture and other crafts.

The Scientific Organizing Committee comprised Luis F. Rodríguez (chair, CRyA-UNAM, Mexico), Zulema Abraham (IAG-USP, Brazil), Vladimir Ávila-Reese (IA-UNAM, Mexico), Rene Méndez (DAS, U. Chile, Chile), Gustavo Romero (IAR, CONICET, Argentina), Gonzalo Tancredi (OALM, FC, Uruguay), and Kathy Vivas (CIDA, Venezuela). The members of the Local Organizing Committee were Enrique Vázquez (chair), Jane Arthur, Adriana Gazol, Yolanda Gómez, Ricardo F. González, William Henney, and Luis F. Rodríguez, all researchers from the Centro de Radioastronomía y Astrofísica (CRyA-UNAM), in Morelia. Additionally, many students and administrative staff of the CRyA helped out before and during the meeting.

The conference could not have taken place without the generous financial support provided by a range of sponsors. We are most grateful to the following institutions: International Astronomical Union (IAU); Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación de la Investigación Científica (CIC-UNAM) and Centro de Radioastronomía y Astrofísica (CRyA-UNAM); Mexican National Science and Technology Council (CONACyT); Michoacán State Government; and Michoacán State Science and Technology Council (COECyT). The IAU provided resources to partially cover expenses of some participants. In total, grants were awarded to 63 young astronomers from the following countries: Argentina (10), Brazil (5), Chile (13), Colombia (2), El Salvador (1), Spain (2), Honduras (1), Mexico (21), Panama (1), Venezuela (7). We also thank the Instituto de Astronomía, UNAM, Mexico, for contributing to the publication costs of these proceedings.

The General Assembly of the IAU took place on Friday November 12th 2010, during which the decision was taken that the next Latin American Regional IAU Meeting will be held in Brazil in the year 2013. The exact venue and dates will be announced during 2012.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants who attended the XIII Latin American Regional IAU Meeting for making it such a great success.

W. J. Henney & S. Torres-Peimbert
Editors of the proceedings