

FOREWORDS

The 6th International Conference on Operations Research took place in Ciudad de La Habana in the period 15-19, 2003. It was co-organized by Universidad de La Habana (Cuba), Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (Germany) and Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Spain). The buildings and facilities of the Universidad de La Habana Campus at Colina Universitaria hosted it. Participants from Argentine, Brazil, Canadá, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, México, Nicaragua, Slovene Sweden and USA, together with Cubans presented more than 120 contributions. They were of high quality and actuality. The Round Table on Applications of Operations Research to Economy was developed in Varadero Beach thanks to the cooperation of Corporación Cubanacán, one of the Cuban sponsors.



The traditional generous support from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdiest (German Service of Academic Exchange) and the International Mathematical Union allowed to invite first rated specialists and some Latin American scientists.

The social activity of the Opening Session was unexpected by the visitors: the internationally well known Barroc Musical Ensemble Ars Longa gave a performance based on the interpretation of old European and Cuban songs. The University Chorus opened the activity. The rest of the social activities, as expected, were strongly spiced with Cuban Salsa. The first farewell activity combined the Conference Dinner at Polinesio Restaurant with a Dancing Night at El Turquino Club at the 23rd floor of Habana Libre Tryp Hotel. The last farewell took place at the cabaret of Brisas del Caribe Hotel in Varadero Beach.

The striking advances in the use of heuristics and the importance of this conference within the Operations Research community of Spanish speakers gave sound reasons for the celebration of the 1^{er} Encuentro Cubano Andaluz sobre Técnicas de Inteligencia Artificial para la Optimización (1st Cuban-Andaluz Meeting on Artificial Intelligence Techniques for Optimization) as a partial offspring. It was chaired by Prof. Gonzalo Joya of Universidad de Málaga and was developed in parallel. Specialists involved in common research attended it. The 1st Summer School on Mathematical Economy was a pre-event activity. It was organized by Prof. Bernd-Arndt Wíckström of Humboldt Universität. Professors of the Institute fur Operations Research gave courses on modern theoretical economical models (micro economy, macro economy, econometry, etc.). It was attended mainly by Cuban professors and advanced students of Mathematics and Economy.

A collection of the contributions presented in the Encuentro Cubano Andaluz has been published in the monographic oeuvre Optimización Inteligente in 2004 by Red Andaluza de Técnicas de Sistemas Inteligentes.

As traditional after a refereeing process a set of representative papers presented in the conference is going to be published in the journal Investigación Operacional. They will appear in the issues 2 and 3 of the present volume. The authors should be congratulated on their fine contributions and the referees for their kind and qualified cooperation.

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Chair of the Conference*