

OPENING ADDRESS

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It is my privilege to greet the participants of the 22nd International Conference on Coordination Chemistry on behalf of the Organizing Committee. We Hungarian coordination chemists are greatly honoured that this country was chosen for the present meeting. As a matter of fact, research in the field of complex compounds was carried out in Hungary in the pre-Werner period. Professor Károly Than, the most important figure in teaching and research in chemistry in nineteenth century Hungary already recognized the importance of Werner's ideas, and, after the first world war, some pioneering work in the field of the spectroscopy of metal complexes was performed at the University of Szeged in the school of Professor Kiss. After the second world war many Hungarian chemists became interested in thermodynamics, kinetics, and structural problems in coordination chemistry.

I am convinced that the ICCCs have had a definite role in the increasing interest in coordination chemistry in Hungary, and I do believe that this statement is valid not only for Hungary but for many other countries, as well. Future historians of chemistry certainly will study the reasons why coordination chemistry became so important in the second half of this century, and undoubtedly they will find that this series of international conferences had a great impact on progress in this field, and this resulted in a branching chain reaction: I think you will agree with me that the ICCCs played a basic role in the initiation of international conferences in organometallic chemistry, bioinorganic chemistry, solution chemistry, chemistry of non-aqueous solutions, etc.

These conclusions necessarily follow from the nature of coordination chemistry. This ingeniously chosen term: coordination, has several meanings - even in the field of chemistry. First of all, it pictorially expresses the most essential feature of chemical compounds: certain of their parts, the ligands, are structurally arranged around the center. It also refers to *any* compound, regardless of whether the center is a metal ion, a carbon atom, or another non-metal atom. Secondly, coordination means that the different branches of chemistry are coordinated to each other - resulting in a unified approach. Coordination chemistry itself is most instrumental in that chemistry is an autonomous field of science. And finally, coordination may mean to bring chemists of mutual interest together. It was our pleasant duty to serve this year the international family of coordination chemists to find an opportunity to present new results, and to exchange experience and ideas. We did our best and apologize if this happens not to be enough.

I must confess that the time is not ideal to organize an international conference. General instabilities make such an enterprise more difficult than in the golden sixties and seventies. Besides these external effects, organizational efforts today are hampered by increasing specialization and by the birth and fast evolution of new fields. These circumstances must certainly be considered by future organizers, too.

We are much obliged to the invited speakers who accepted our invitation and whose contributions, together with the other lectures and posters, hopefully will make this meeting an important event by presenting the most promising and novel directions in contemporary coordination chemistry.

We are particularly happy that we can greet among us some of the founding fathers of the ICCCs; it is a pity that we could not find at least a few funding fathers, too.

Finally, I express our gratitude to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Hungarian Chemical Society and the Central Research Institute for Chemistry (CRIC) for their financial and moral support, to CRIC for organization, to IUPAC for its sponsorship, and to our many colleagues for their help.