

Editorial

The *XXVI Congresso Latino-Americano de Química* (*CLAQ* – The Latin American Chemistry Congress) and the *27th Reunião Anual da Sociedade Brasileira de Química* (*RASBQ* – Brazilian Chemical Society Annual Meeting) will be held in Salvador, Bahia from May 30 to June 2, 2004. *CLAQ* is an event of the *Federação Latino Americana de Sociedades/Associações de Química* (*FLAQ* – Latin American Federation of Chemical Societies/Associations), which gathers together members of the Latin American scientific societies with the objective of exchange among the different countries in this part of the world. Brazil last hosted this *FLAQ* event in 1984.

At the last reunion in Cancun, the *FLAQ* delegates not only opted for the next congress to be held in Brazil, but also chose the *SBQ* - Brazilian Chemical Society - as host. Another important decision was which Brazilian city should be chosen for the event. It became apparent that the congress should not be held either in São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro. Thus, the *SBQ* representatives in attendance at the reunion, Profs. Paulo Cezar Vieira and Jailson B. de Andrade, suggested Salvador, which was unanimously accepted. Salvador was proposed, among other reasons, because it had already hosted the annual *SBPC* reunion in 2001 and the local organizing committee's experience might be passed on to the *SBQ* and, mainly, since it possesses an infrastructure for such a sizeable event, including an excellent convention hall and extensive hotel accommodations. It is also noteworthy to mention that Salvador is one of the most visited tourist cities in Brazil, which is an extra motivation to participate in this event.

Once these choices were made, the next step was to begin organizing the event which should enjoy the participation of the entire chemistry community. To be as wide ranging as possible, the *SBQ* invited representatives of the *ABQ* (*Associação Brasileira de Química* – Brazilian Chemical Association) and *ABEQ* (*Associação Brasileira de Engenharia Química* – Brazilian Association of Chemical Engineering). After ample discussion, it was decided that the project for organizing the *XXVI CLAQ* would be carried out by the *SBQ* alone, and that other associations and/or societies would participate with informal support. Hence, after over one year of preparation, we arrive in Salvador for this event, the greatest gathering of Latin American Chemistry.

At this moment (the beginning of May), there are over 2,600 participants registered, 10% of whom are from abroad. We believe that at the time of the event, there will be over 3,000 registered, which will signify approximately 4,000 visitors involved with *CLAQ/SBQ* present in Salvador for the congress. For such an extensive event, we have

planned an intense scientific program condensed into three days, involving an inaugural plenary conference, symposia and workshops, in addition to panel sessions. All of these activities are of the utmost importance, while the “Workshop on Environmental Chemistry” merits highlighting - an activity organized together with the *Divisão de Química Ambiental da SBQ* (*SBQ*'s Division for Environmental Chemistry) and the ACS (American Chemical Society). Actually, *CLAQ/RASBQ* is presenting a program of activities distributed over more than the three days mentioned, since they will begin on May 28 and 29 with the “Workshop on Environmental Chemistry” and, on the 30th, there will be various workshops and symposia dealing with different areas of Chemistry such as biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, spectroscopy, history of Chemistry and Chemistry education. The inaugural plenary conference on the night of the 30th will be headed by Prof. Oswaldo Luiz Alves (ex-President of the *SBQ*).

In addition to the scientific activities, several reunions are planned, part of the usual activities of the *Federação Latino Americana de Sociedades Químicas* - Latin American Federation of Chemical Societies. Of special interest is the reunion of the scientific society presidents, representatives of the ACS publications, a representative of the Royal Society of Chemistry and the *JBCS* and *QN* publishers. At this time, it is planned to discuss the role and importance of scientific publications in Latin America, affording special attention to the *SBQ* periodicals.

The annual *SBQ* reunion, on this 27th edition, will not be held in Poços de Caldas, where it has been for the last eight years. The change in location is due mainly to the issues of availability for a congress of this size, but also to the wishes of the *SBQ* to realize its annual reunion at a different site once every four years. If, on one hand, this reunion raises excellent expectations as to its success, on the other, its organization in a city far from São Paulo, location of the national secretary, means that new difficulties related to the organization will have to be dealt with. Nevertheless, the possibility of facilitating the presence of participants from the North and Northeast regions of Brazil should be considered one of the deciding factors for this decision.

The realization of the *XXVI CLAQ*, together with the 27th *RASBQ* is of utmost importance as, after 20 years, the most important event in the area of Chemistry in the entire Southern Hemisphere will once again be held in Brazil.

See you in Salvador.

Paulo Cezar Vieira