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**International collaboration in astronomy: actual situation and prospects, Moscow, 25 May-2 June, 2002**

N. Bochkarev

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## **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN ASTRONOMY: ACTUAL SITUATION AND PROSPECTS, MOSCOW, 25 MAY–2 JUNE, 2002 – PREFACE**

The conference 'International Collaboration in Astronomy: Actual Situation and Prospects' took place on 25 May–2 June, 2002 at the grounds of the main campus of Lomonosov Moscow State University on Vorobiev Hills, Moscow.

The conference was attached to the Sixth General Meeting of the Eurasian Astronomical Society (EAAS). The EAAS Council Report for the period: 30 November 1997–27 May, 2002 was presented to and discussed by the Sixth EAAS General Meeting. The Meeting gave attention to re-election of co-chair-persons and Council Board, and the solution of current problems related to some activities of the Society.

The text of the report and related material were published (in Russian) in the *Society Bulletin* No. 6 issued by the opening of the Meeting (68 pages). The Proceedings of the EAAS Sixth General Meeting are not included in the Proceedings of the Conference.

The conference was sponsored by Lomonosov Moscow State University, the Russian Foundation for Basic Research, and the International Association for the Promotion of Cooperation with Scientists from the New Independent States (NISs) of the Territory of the Former Soviet Union (FSU) (INTAS), a programme worked out and funded by the European Community to encourage joint scientific activities among INTAS members and the NISs in many branches of science. Following the definition currently adopted by the INTAS, we here mean by the NISs the former Soviet Republics without the three Baltic countries, namely Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The conference consisted of more than 200 scientists from the NISs, Baltic countries, central Europe and some other countries. Besides scientific results the participants paid some attention to considering the character of the cooperation between scientists from different countries.

The conference had two goals:

- (i) to exchange information about the latest scientific results (as usual);
- (ii) to promote the experience of the most successful scientific projects conducted in cooperation with scientists from the FSU and by scientists from FSU and other countries.

The second goal is particularly important for two reasons.

- (1) FSU astronomers consider it important to maintain the links formed over many decades which are in danger of being completely broken under current conditions. The problems are more acute because most former Soviet astronomers originally had, and after the

disintegration of the USSR, kept their permanent positions inside Russia, while most former Soviet astronomical observatories were originally built on the territory and have then become the property of other FSU countries.

- (2) FSU astronomers seek to become integrated into the world astronomical community. For an intensive development of any cooperation, each side should be interested in and benefit from this. The discussion held in the framework of the conference programme revealed at least two reasons for our Western colleagues' possible interest in cooperating with FSU astronomers in spite of our well-known economical problems.
  - (a) Because of many years of quasi-isolation, the experience gathered and ideas worked out by FSU astronomers are sometimes of a kind rather different from that of their colleagues from the rest of the world.
  - (b) Russia with neighbouring FSU countries extending over belts of more than 10 h are geographically well suited to astronomical observations. With telescopes arranged longitudinally, we can 'compensate' for the Earth rotation, that is carry on continual observations for about 15 h a day, which increases greatly the effectiveness of astronomical observations of, say, non-stationary objects, even with cheap telescopes with a diameter as small as 0.5–1 m.

In spite of the importance of the cooperation problem, however, the *Proceedings of the Conference* include, with few exceptions, only scientific presentations by the participants of the Conference.

The conference scientific programme included the following sessions.

#### *Plenary sessions*

1. Collaboration between the FSU (=NISs + Baltic countries) scientists and collaboration of FSU scientists with scientists from other countries
2. Collaboration between countries covered by INTAS programmes
3. International databases and informational support
4. International collaboration in secondary and higher education and propagation of scientific achievements and knowledge (mini-symposium on astronomical education)
5. International collaboration in working out space- and ground-based scientific facilities

#### *Sectional sessions*

6. Celestial mechanics and gravimetry
7. The Sun and planetary systems
8. Galaxies and cosmology
  - Topic 1: interstellar medium
  - Topic 2: galaxies
  - Topic 3: cosmology
9. Stellar astronomy and astrophysics

#### *Introductory presentation*

N. Bochkarev (Moscow) The place of astronomy in world science and economics

#### *Invited plenary talks*

- A. Boyarchuk (Moscow), B. Shustov (Moscow) and W. Wamsteker (European Southern Observatory) World Space Observatory
- D. Mkrtychian (Odessa, Ukraine) International cooperation in astroseismological investigations
- Ya. Yatskiv (Kiev, Ukraine) Ukraine–Russia collaboration in astronomy and astrophysics

- R. Gershberg and N. Shakhovskaya (Crimea, Ukraine) Some results achieved in Crimean Astrophysical Observatory-initiated international campaigns on studies of flaring red dwarfs
- N. Bochkarev (Moscow) Monitoring of active galactic nuclei: results and prospects
- M. Gaskell (USA) Large-scale multi-wavelength international active galactic nuclei monitoring campaigns
- M. Dimitrijevič (Belgrade, Yugoslavia) Spectral line shapes in astrophysics
- A. Cherepashchuk (Moscow) Monitoring of unique astrophysical objects
- L. Esquivias (INTAS) INTAS impact on Eastern–Western Europe collaboration

We are publishing selected proceedings of the conference presented by the authors and refereed. The papers are grouped according to the types of astronomical and astrophysical object and method.

N. BOCHKAREV