

EDITORIAL

A Major Event for Swiss Chemistry: Geneva is Going to Host Both the 36th IUPAC Congress and 39th IUPAC General Assembly in August 1997!**

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Introduction

It has already a long story, but the event is still more than one year ahead! Ever since its foundation in 1992, the Section Chemical Research (SCR) of the New Swiss Chemical Society (NSCS) had the intention of organizing in Switzerland a large event, so as to promote the image of Swiss chemistry by attracting a large number of participants to an international conference with the highest scientific level. To this end, the SCR Committee has approached several times in 1993 and 1994 Prof. *T. Kaden*, the chairman of the late Swiss Committee for Chemistry, to inquire about possible opportunities in this direction. By end 1994, the SCR Committee was informed that the next free date to organize an important event such as the IUPAC (International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry) Congress was 1999, as the 35th Congress was scheduled for 1995 in Istanbul and the 36th one for 1997 in Rio de Janeiro. In addition, according to a decision of the Executive Committee of IUPAC, both IUPAC Congress and General Assembly, which were organized previously every second year in different countries, should be held starting 1997 in the same country, back-to-back, with the Congress first. This automatically meant that the Swiss candidature for 1999 should be prepared in such a way as to plan the organization of both events.

Early 1995, the SCR Committee informed the NSCS Committee of the situation and of its intention to organize the IUPAC events in Switzerland, possibly in Geneva, in 1999. It immediately appeared that this organization would be such a big task (and adventure...) that the NSCS itself should be in charge of it, and not the SCR alone. In addition, after the disappearing of the Swiss Committee for Chemistry, the NSCS is in charge of representing the community of Swiss chemists in IUPAC, and it was natural

that the NSCS would act as the organizer of future IUPAC events in Switzerland. Time was short for the preparation of the Swiss candidature for 1999, and the NSCS Committee decided to proceed with a preliminary proposal to organize the events in Geneva. Consequently, the NSCS Committee asked the author of these lines to prepare the candidature files required by IUPAC for both events. This was done in March 1995, right after the visit to Geneva of several members of the Oxford IUPAC Secretariat, who found adequate both the venues chosen for the events and the conditions of accommodation. At practically the same time, the NSCS Committee appointed as follows our Organizing Committee for both IUPAC events:

<i>Jacques Weber</i> (chairman)	University of Geneva
<i>Roland Darms</i> (treasurer)	New Swiss Chemical Society
<i>Nathalie Girard</i> (secretary)	University of Geneva
<i>François Diederich</i>	Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zürich
<i>Thomas A. Kaden</i>	University of Basel
<i>Emilio Kyburz</i>	New Swiss Chemical Society
<i>Paul Müller</i>	University of Geneva
<i>Pierre Nordhoff</i>	University of Geneva
<i>Hans-Luzius Senti</i>	Firmenich Geneva
<i>Roland Wenger</i>	Sandoz Pharma Basel
<i>H. Michael Widmer</i>	Ciba Basel
<i>Alexander von Zelewsky</i>	University of Fribourg

In May 1995, this Organizing Committee was informed that, due to severe problems related to the organization of the 39th General Assembly in Rio de Janeiro in 1997, IUPAC had decided to attribute it to Geneva. The same decision was taken in July 1995 for the 36th IUPAC Congress, and both the NSCS Committee and the Organizing Committee were then faced with the unexpected task to organize the events in 1997, *i.e.*, two years earlier than previously planned. Time was shorter than ever and, thanks to the rapid acceptance of Prof. *F. Diederich* to act as chairman, a Scientific Committee and an International Advisory Committee were set up as follows, their most urgent task being to prepare a high-level scientific programme for the 36th IUPAC Congress:

**Consult the IUPAC Congress page on the web
<http://www.unige.ch/sciences/chimie/IUPAC/IUPAC.html>

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Congress Scientific Committee

<i>François Diederich</i> (chairman)	Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zürich
<i>E. Peter Kündig</i>	University of Geneva
<i>Christian Leumann</i>	University of Bern
<i>André E. Merbach</i>	University of Lausanne
<i>Paul Müller</i>	University of Geneva
<i>Ferdinand Naef</i>	Firmenich Geneva
<i>Martin Quack</i>	Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zürich
<i>Jacques Weber</i>	University of Geneva
<i>Roland Wenger</i>	Sandoz Pharma Basel
<i>H. Michael Widmer</i>	Ciba Basel
<i>Alexander von Zelewsky</i>	University of Fribourg

International Advisory Committee

<i>W. Arber</i> , Switzerland	<i>J. Lewis</i> , United Kingdom
<i>J.-E. Bäckvall</i> , Sweden	<i>G. Modena</i> , Italy
<i>A. Baiker</i> , Switzerland	<i>O.M. Nefedov</i> , Russia
<i>D. Bellus</i> , Switzerland	<i>J.F. Normant</i> , France
<i>R. Breslow</i> , USA	<i>M.T. Reetz</i> , Germany
<i>R.R. Ernst</i> , Switzerland	<i>J. Roeraade</i> , Sweden
<i>H. Iwamura</i> , Japan	<i>H. Rohrer</i> , Switzerland
<i>J. Jortner</i> , Israel	<i>A. Sargeson</i> , Australia
<i>I. Karube</i> , Japan	<i>U.W. Suter</i> , Switzerland
<i>J.-M. Lehn</i> , France	<i>Y. Yamada</i> , Japan

We are today about half-way on the long road of organizing these two IUPAC events, which will take place in Geneva on the following dates:

36th IUPAC Congress, August 17–22, 1997

39th IUPAC General Assembly, August 23–30, 1997.

For both events, a Professional Congress Organizer, AKM, located both in Geneva and Basel, has been selected and contracted to be in charge of a great deal of the practical organization.

It is therefore the proper time to describe here the present situation as far as the organization of both events is concerned and, in particular, to extend a warm invitation to all the members of the NSCS to participate in the 36th IUPAC Congress. Actually, the purpose of these lines is to develop somewhat the content of the First Circular of the 36th IUPAC Congress, which is just now being widely distributed among the international community of chemists, and to present the 39th General Assembly.

About IUPAC and Previous IUPAC Congresses and General Assemblies

The point is not here to describe at length what IUPAC is and what are its main achievements and projects. The interested reader may consult to this end the issue 1/2 of CHIMIA 1996, 50, 38, which presents an interview of our Swiss colleague Prof. A. Fischli, the present IUPAC chairman. In addition, the IUPAC

Handbook 1994–1995 (Blackwell, Oxford, 1994) is a must for all the curious minds in this respect. However, we found it useful to briefly summarize some relevant information about IUPAC and previous IUPAC Congresses and General Assemblies, in order to emphasize the importance for Switzerland and for Swiss chemistry of the forthcoming 1997 events.

Formed in 1919, IUPAC is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit association of organizations known as national adhering organizations (NAOs). A NAO represents the chemists of a member country.

IUPAC has over 40 NAOs. Twelve other countries, known as Observer Countries, are also linked to IUPAC.

IUPAC is the recognized world authority on chemical nomenclature, terminology, symbols, units, atomic weights, and related topics. IUPAC provides advice on chemical matters to international agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Organisation for Standardization (ISO), and Organisation Internationale de Métrologie Légale (OIML).

Divisions and Commissions

Some 1500 chemists throughout the world are engaged in the scientific work of IUPAC on a voluntary basis. These chemists work in IUPAC's committees and commissions. IUPAC has 32 commissions, which are grouped into the following seven divisions:

I	Physical	V	Analytical
II	Inorganic	VI	Applied
III	Organic	VII	Clinical
IV	Macromolecular		

Each division has several commissions. For example, the Physical Chemistry Division has commissions on spectroscopy, electrochemistry and symbols; whilst the Applied Chemistry Division has commissions on food chemistry and atmospheric chemistry *etc.* The commission members elect a division committee which regulates the affairs of the division. Commission members may be 'titular' or 'associate'. The Union makes payment towards the travel and subsistence costs of titular members, but not associate members, to attend commission meetings or general assemblies. In due course associate members frequently become titular members.

IUPAC Objectives

IUPAC has four major objectives:

- to promote continuing co-operation among the chemists of the member countries;
- to study topics of international importance to pure and applied chemistry which need regulation, standardization, or codification;

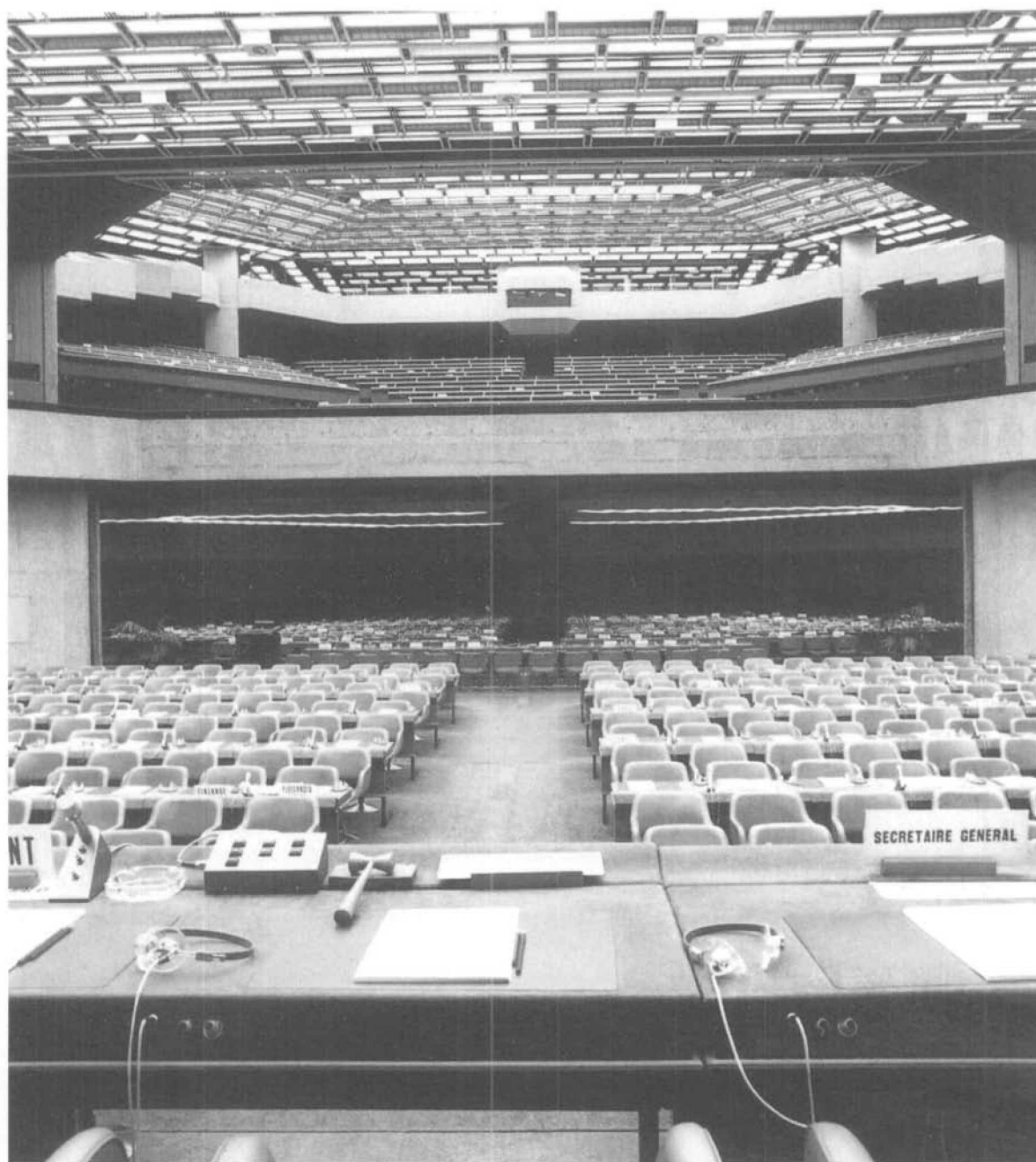


Fig. 1. The large conference room (1740 seats) of the International Conference Centre of Geneva

- to co-operate with other international organizations which deal with topics of a chemical nature;
- to contribute to the advancement of pure and applied chemistry in all its aspects.

IUPAC Congresses

The biennial Congresses of IUPAC have been set up to constitute an outstanding forum for the presentation of modern trends and frontiers of chemical research. The first one was organized in Brussels in 1894, under the auspices of the International Association of Chemical Societies, the last ones having taken place on the following sites:

28th	Vancouver (Canada)	1981
29th	Cologne (FRG)	1983

30th	Manchester (UK)	1985
31st	Sofia (Bulgaria)	1987
32nd	Stockholm (Sweden)	1989
33rd	Budapest (Hungary)	1991
34th	Beijing (China)	1993
35th	Istanbul (Turkey)	1995

The IUPAC Congress was held once before in Switzerland (Zürich, 1955). The average attendance at these Congresses is roughly 1500 participants, with a peak over 2000 in Stockholm.

These Congresses are in principle not financially supported by IUPAC; in addition, the organizers had until recently some freedom in defining the scope and topics of the scientific program. However, due to the fact that the scientific program of some of these Congresses was too broad and consequently not sufficiently focused on important specific topics, the IUPAC has recently dictated some guidelines. Namely, the IUPAC Congress

should constitute a central international event in the world of chemical research, fulfilling the following goals:

1. To present the most outstanding relevant developments in modern chemistry
2. To inspire high standards of excellence in pure and applied chemistry research
3. To attract outstanding scientists to present central lectures on modern chemical research
4. To inspire the young generation of chemists in developed and developing countries.

In addition, the IUPAC recommends to launch the scientific program for the Congress under the name *Frontiers in Chemistry*, by focusing on interdisciplinary topics. As we shall see below, the Scientific Committee of the 36th IUPAC Congress has closely followed these guidelines.

IUPAC General Assembly

The IUPAC General Assembly (GA) has little in common with a scientific conference or congress. It is indeed not open for general participation but restricted to members of IUPAC bodies that meet on this occasion. This is the case for practically all the IUPAC committees and commissions, which meet during the first half of the GA, followed by the meeting of the IUPAC Council.

The first IUPAC GA was organized in Rome in 1920, the last ones having taken place on the following sites:

31st	Leuven (Belgium)	1981
32nd	Lyngby (Denmark)	1983
33rd	Lyon (France)	1985
34th	Boston (USA)	1987
35th	Lund (Sweden)	1989
36th	Hamburg (FRG)	1991
37th	Lisbon (Portugal)	1993
38th	Guilford (UK)	1995

The IUPAC GAs were held three times before in Switzerland (Lucerne/Zürich, 1936; Zürich, 1955; Davos, 1979). The average attendance at these GAs is 600–700 participants, the major problem being that the meeting of all the IUPAC bodies may require the simultaneous use of up to 50 seminar rooms on the same site!

The whole scientific program of the GA is prepared by IUPAC itself, the local organizers being in charge of the accommodation, administrative secretariat, meeting rooms, social program and financing. Indeed, as far as the latter point is concerned, the rule is that the host country finances the GA, the IUPAC making a financial contribution towards the subsistence and travel expenses of its titular members.

The IUPAC events to Be Held in Geneva, 1997

1. 36th IUPAC Congress, Geneva, August 17–22, 1997

The general theme of the Congress, as defined by the Scientific Committee, is *Frontiers in Chemistry, New Perspectives*.



Fig. 2. The Uni Mail Building of the University of Geneva, seen from Boulevard Carl-Vogt



Fig. 3. The Sciences II Building of the University of Geneva

tives for the 2000s. Indeed, the aim of the organizers is to bring together distinguished experts not only to present their work but to discuss the major scientific and technological challenges facing chemistry in the next millennium.

The Scientific Committee has selected the following interdisciplinary themes that will provide a framework for lectures and discussions:

- Advanced Materials
- Catalysis and Synthetic Methods
- Molecular Properties and Reaction Pathways
- Medicinal Chemistry and Combinatorial Chemistry
- Supramolecular Chemistry and Biomolecular Recognition
- Advances in Computational Chemistry.

These themes will be presented concurrently in five parallel sessions in the traditional fields of Organic Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry, Physical and Technical Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry and Nanosciences, Chemistry and Biology.

Each theme will be treated in one parallel session only at the same time over each day, which will allow the participants to attend all the lectures devoted to a particular theme. The conference program will include 9 plenary lectures (60 min), then, shared among the parallel sessions, 40 keynote lectures (50 min), 60 invited lectures (30 min) and 85 oral contributions (15 min). In addition, 3 poster sessions will be

organized. The detailed program will be presented in the Second Circular.

The list of plenary and keynote lecturers who have accepted the invitation is truly impressive and will certainly lay the foundation for a highly successful meeting, of a very high international standard, and a unique demonstration of the strength of chemical sciences, research and technology, in the broadest sense. Indeed, the following eminent scientists have accepted to present:

Plenary Lectures:

G. Balavoine, France
P.J. Crutzen, Germany
G. Ertl, Germany
O. Kahn, France
J. Nüesch, Switzerland

D. Seebach, Switzerland
P.G. Schultz, USA
C. Weissmann, Switzerland
R.N. Zare, USA

Keynote Lectures:

L. Addadi, Israel
J.K. Barton, USA
H.U. Blaser, Switzerland
H.-H. Brintzinger, Germany
G.R. Desiraju, India
D.A. Evans, USA

G. Fleming, USA
C. Floriani, Switzerland
H. Gaub, Germany
J.A. Gladysz, USA
R.H. Grubbs, USA
D. Hilvert, USA

<i>M. Hirama</i> , Japan	<i>J.-P. Sauvage</i> , France
<i>C. Khosla</i> , USA	<i>H.F. Schaefer</i> , USA
<i>W. Lindner</i> , Austria	<i>H. Schwarz</i> , Germany
<i>S.J. Lippard</i> , USA	<i>J.F. Stoddart</i> , United Kingdom
<i>S. Mann</i> , United Kingdom	<i>J. Troe</i> , Germany
<i>A. Manz</i> , United Kingdom	<i>M. Uhlén</i> , Sweden
<i>B.H. Meier</i> , Netherlands	<i>W. van Gunsteren</i> , Switzerland
<i>K. Müller</i> , Switzerland	<i>G.L. Verdine</i> , USA
<i>M. Parrinello</i> , Germany	<i>H. Waldmann</i> , Germany
<i>M. Prato</i> , Italy	<i>D. Wemmer</i> , USA
<i>K.N. Raymond</i> , USA	<i>A.F. Williams</i> , Switzerland
<i>J. Rebek, Jr.</i> , USA	<i>G. Whitesides</i> , USA
<i>F.E. Regnier</i> , USA	<i>H. Yamamoto</i> , Japan
<i>R. Robson</i> , Australia	<i>K.I. Zamaraev</i> , Russia

The Congress is going to be held at the Centre International de Conférences de Genève (CICG), 15–17 Rue de Varembe, 1211 Geneva 20, which is ideally equipped with conference rooms of different sizes seating up to 1740 persons (*Fig. 1*). An exhibition by scientific companies (books and journals publishers, chemical instrumentation, computer hardware and software in chemistry, *etc.*) will also be organized at the CICG.

The registration fee for the Congress will be CHF 500.– for regular participants and CHF 200.– for students. It is anticipated that some bursaries will be available to help young students and Eastern Europe participants to attend the Congress. A choice of accommodations at various price categories will be available in Geneva and may be reserved at time of registration. A program for accompanying persons, together with pre- and post-conference tours will be organized.

Further information and the Second Circular, to be mailed in September 1996, may be obtained by writing to the Congress secretariat:

IUPAC '97
c/o AKM Congress Service
P.O. Box 37
CH-1218 Le Grand Saconnex, Switzerland
Fax: +41 22 761 16 62

The important dates to keep in mind are the following:
Mailing Second Circular
September 15, 1996

Submission of abstracts
February 28, 1997

Notification of acceptance
April 30, 1997

Deadline early registration
May 15, 1997

The Organizing Committee is convinced that it is a great honor for Switzerland to host this prestigious Congress, which probably represents one of the most important events in Swiss chemistry of the next ten years. In addition, the very high level

of the scientific program should be able to convince many chemists from Switzerland and abroad to participate. The organizers expect that most Swiss chemists, both from industry and academia, will attend the Congress. Students and young chemists are particularly welcome to submit an abstract for an oral contribution or a poster which would allow them to present their results to a wide international audience.

2. 39th IUPAC General Assembly, Geneva, August 23–30, 1997

The 39th IUPAC GA will be organized immediately after the Congress, in order to allow participants to attend both events. As mentioned above, a major problem for the organizers was to find a venue with 50 seminar rooms of various capacities (typically 10–30 seats). In view of this constraint, it rapidly appeared that the University of Geneva was an ideal location for the GA, specially as the modern Uni Mail Building (*Fig. 2*) offers very good facilities of that sort. Both Sciences II (*Fig. 3*) and Uni Mail Buildings will therefore share the venue of the GA, with 26 meeting rooms reserved in the first facility and 24 in the second one. These buildings lie quite close to one another, at a 10-min walking distance, which should not be a problem for the delegates. In addition, both buildings are modern with large open spaces, ample photocopying capacity, and availability of computer rooms and cafeterias.

Undoubtedly, though the local organizers do not have the burden of undertaking the preparation of the scientific program, the preparation of the GA is a matter of concern, as many points (maintenance of the seminar rooms, secretariat, registration desk, staff for taking care of faxes, photocopies, computers, *etc.*) have to be carefully considered and, for financial reasons, the involvement of AKM is smaller for the GA. However, the organizers are convinced that the competence and enthusiasm of the volunteers (students, staff of the Section of Chemistry of the University of Geneva), who have already accepted to work in the context of the GA, will allow to overcome all the difficulties and to lead to a successful 39th IUPAC General Assembly.

Conclusions

The organization of both 36th IUPAC Congress and 39th IUPAC General Assembly in Geneva represents beyond any doubt a major event for Swiss chemistry. Both the NSCS Committee and the Organizing Committee of these events expect that Swiss chemists will be enthusiastic in participating in the Congress, the high scientific level of which should have a positive impact on their education or continuous formation in chemistry. As far as sponsorship is concerned, the first responses from Swiss chemical industries and national institutions is encouraging, which shows that the importance of the events is not discussed. The organizers therefore expect to be able to present in further issues of CHIMIA more good news about the 1997 IUPAC events taking place in Geneva.