Preface

An International Workshop on Combinatorics, Linear Algebra, and Graph Coloring was held from August 9 to 14, 2003, at the Institute for Studies in Theoretical Physics and Mathematics (IPM) in Tehran, Iran. The organizers of the workshop were Samad Hedayat (University of Illinois, Chicago, USA), Hadi Kharaghani (University of Lethbridge, Canada), Gholamreza B. Khosrovshahi (Associate Director and Head of the School of Mathematics of IPM, and University of Tehran, Iran), and Shahriar Shahriari (Pomona College, USA). The keynote speakers were Richard A. Brualdi (University of Wisconsin, USA), Peter Cameron (Queen Mary College of the University of London, UK), Samad Hedayat (University of Illinois, Chicago, USA), Willem H. Haemers (Tilburg University, The Netherlands), Charles R. Johnson (College of William & Mary, USA), Hadi Kharaghani (University of Lethbridge, Canada), Shahriar Shahriari (Pomona College, USA), Carsten Thomassen (Technical University of Denmark, Denmark), and Richard M. Wilson (California Institute of Technology, USA). Zoltan Furedi (University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, USA) and Brendan McKay (Australian National University, Australia) were also designated as keynote speakers but for personal reasons had to cancel. Mehdi Behzad (Shahid Beheshti University and, at the time, President of the Iranian Mathematical Society) was a special invited participant. There were excellent contributed talks, many by young Iranian mathematicians. A problem session, expertly managed by Peter Cameron, was held one afternoon. The participants agreed that the local organization of the workshop was truly excellent. Participants coming from outside of Iran were effusive in their praise for the warm, hospitable, and generous reception that was given them.

Many remarkable excursions were organized. The highlights were: (i) a visit to Abgineh Museum, the glassware and ceramic museum of Iran, housed in a building constructed in the 19th century, (ii) a trip to the Stone Garden of Jamshidieh, a magnificent park up a mountainside offering spectacular views of Tehran, (iii) a trip to Sa'd-Abad containing many former palaces of Reza Shah, some of which now house museums, and (iv) an excursion to the magnificent Carpet Museum of Iran where, on display, were gorgeous and very old carpets. In addition, the principal speakers and conference organizers were treated to a post-workshop overnight plane trip to Isfahan, the former Persian capital. Isfahan is a gorgeous city with a stunning square, equally stunning mosques and bridges, and a vast and unique bazaar. Some additional details about the workshop, including some photographs, can be found in the *Bulletin of the Institute of Combinatorics and its Applications*, vol. 40 (2004), 122–128.

This Special Issue of *Discrete Mathematics* contains a selection of papers on which talks at the conference were based. These include contributions from all the keynote speakers and a selection of the problems from the problem session. We are very grateful to Peter Hammer for allowing us to organize and edit this Special Issue.

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