

Foreword

Het is een gewoonte bepaalde verjaardagen speciaal te herdenken. Zo werd het vijftigjarig bestaan van de Academie met luister gevierd in 1978. Dit jaar bestaat onze instelling 75 jaar. Zulke belangrijke data zijn tijdstippen van bezinning. Deze verjaardag biedt daartoe een uitstekende gelegenheid.

Aussi en 2003 la séance d'ouverture de l'année académique revêt-elle un caractère particulier. Au lieu de l'après-midi traditionnelle, une manifestation internationale étalée sur deux jours fut organisée. L'évènement eut lieu au Palais des Académies. La séance inaugurale fut honorée par la présence de son Altesse Royale la Princesse Astrid. Nous tenons à lui exprimer toute notre reconnaissance. Une musique interculturelle adaptée au thème fut très appréciée*.

This celebration gave us the opportunity to reflect upon the theme "New Challenges for the Academies in a Changing World".

The viewpoints from Latin America, Asia and Africa came to us through the voices of the Academies from Bolivia, India and Africa. The role of the Academies in science and technology for development was put forward by representatives of international institutions. During a round-table forum, members of the Academy gave their view on the topic, followed by a large discussion.

Besides being a centre of scientific thinking, a platform for objective discussion, a meeting-place for scientists from North and South, the Academy is characterized by its intellectual independence and neutrality. More specifically, our Academy of Overseas Sciences has the privilege of concentrating overseas expertise.

* Intercultural music: Philippe Malfeyt, lute; Candido Capillo, arpa y flauta; Hua Xia, p'i-p'a & yueh-qin; Abid el Bahri, 'ūd.

Its specific role of transdisciplinary dialogue, of North-South inter-communication and scientific exchange has been emphasized during this symposium.

This anniversary was the occasion to consider, together with our partners from Overseas, the ways of strengthening the role of the Academy and meeting the challenges of the future.

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