

# P R E F A C E

The XXIIIrd IAU General Assembly took place in Kyoto, Japan, in August 1997. It featured an exceptionally rich scientific programme: Between three Invited Discourses, six Symposia, 23 Joint Discussions, three Special Scientific Sessions, and well over 100 Commission and Working Group meetings, a total of over 800 oral and 1100 poster papers were presented. On behalf of the Union, I thank my predecessor, Immo Appenzeller, for the overall planning of this programme, as well as the many scientific and local organisers whose hard work assured the success of the individual events.

As a result, the present volume of the Highlights of Astronomy, which presents the Invited Discourses and the proceedings or summaries of the Joint Discussions and Special Scientific Sessions, has been divided into two separate sub-volumes (Vol. 11A+B) in order to retain a manageable book size. In addition, the Proceedings of the six Symposia (nos. 183-188) will be published separately in the regular IAU Symposium Series.

I extend my best thanks to all authors and Editors of the reports on the individual events who submitted their contributions by the specified deadline. Still, a number of key contributions were only received after long delays, and for three events no manuscript was received at all. Together with some confusion over L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X style file versions, a number of health issues at the Secretariat, and unexpected other commitments of the writer's time, this has delayed the completion of this volume considerably from the original schedule. I thank Ms. Monique Léger-Orine for assistance in tracking and retrieving the contributions, and especially Copenhagen astronomy students Michael Cramer Andersen, Margit Dühring, and Brian Lindgren Jensen for their dedicated, vigorous, and painstaking efforts to produce the final camera-ready manuscript; without their help, this volume would have been even further delayed and less uniform in presentation.

Finally, I thank Drs. G. Marcy and M. Mayor for providing the data from which the cover diagram of Vol. 11A was prepared, and Mr. Eckhard Slawik of Waldenburg, Germany, for the cover photo of Vol. 11B; I hope that these figures may in part compensate for the missing contributions concerning just those topics.

Copenhagen and Paris, August 1998  
Johannes Andersen  
General Secretary