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Introduction

This year, our conference has the number 17 in the sequence of this event. For me, this is a source of great satisfaction. I first joined this SPIE conference on Infrared Technology and Applications as a chair in 1991, having organized a two-day Jet Propulsion Laboratory session. Those were good times for IR and space exploration: the U.S. space IR observational facility was fully funded with a large aperture telescope to compete with the European facility, Infrared Space Observatory, known as ISO, which was nearing deployment.

This year, our conference included six sessions and a poster session: IR Missions Looking into Space, IR Missions Looking Down, IR Missions Looking at the Atmosphere, IR Technologies, Radiometric Standards at NIST, and Applications of IR Technologies. Altogether, 32 papers were presented with authors representing the U.S., most of the western European countries, Russia, Canada, Mexico and Argentina, with about one-third of the papers being written by authors from different countries. The participants felt that the papers were of interest and we are proud of good interactions between the presenters and the audience. Most talks were followed by vivid discussions, and some had to be continued during the break times.

A great deal of the conference success may be attributed to the active participation of the attendees. Another significant contribution goes to the experienced and dexterous committee members who also participated as session chairs. Finally, a tremendous amount of work is performed behind the scenes by SPIE staff who conduct all the organizational tasks that make the conference run so smoothly and who finally publish an outstanding book in such a short time. To all such active players, I wish to express my most profound gratitude, hoping for future collaborations.

Marija Strojnik

