

Q: Why do you think that organizing an ICM in Paris in 2022 is important?

A: This would be the first time after 16 years to have an ICM in Europe, since 2006 in Madrid. I think another ICM in Paris could send a powerful "political" message of a joint community and of "doing things together" in a world that seems more divisive and scattered and hostile every day, moving and breaking apart. Think of Paris as a center of a "European Community" for the 10 days of the Congress and beyond...

Q: Mathematics are playing an increasingly important role in the scientific and technological advancement of our societies. Would the organization of an ICM in Paris seem important to you in order to strengthen the presence of Mathematics in the society and also to attract young people to mathematics and science in general?

A: I would assume that there are great opportunities for presenting mathematics not only as a science, but also as a field of activity for individuals and for groups: These days, if you want to study a difficult field where you can "move things" and "drive technology" and "do something valuable for the world," mathematics could and should be seen as a natural choice. This is a powerful message that a Paris congress, jointly e.g. with Paris museums and Paris universities, could make and spread widely.

Q: You have always been very interested in the outreach and popularization of mathematics. Do you think that the organization of the ICM in France

could be a good opportunity to do a lot of work in this direction? Towards the young? Towards the general public in general?

A: French mathematicians have great experience and ambitious agendas for outreach and popularization - I am thinking of Cedric Villani and Etienne Ghys, to name only two out of many. I think they would know how to reach the public, how to get the young and the mathematically-hungry interested and excited about "what's happening at the ICM" (that is, about mathematics). Again, this should happen not only in Paris or only in France, but for "Europe and beyond."

Q: The French bid proposes to organize, before the congress, a significant number of schools for mathematicians from developing countries in general and, more specifically, for Africa. Obviously these activities are not part of the congress itself, but they could complement it in a very useful way. What do you think?

A: Such schools are certainly a great way to communicate mathematics, and to provide access to knowledge for third-world mathematical communities. This would follow the pattern (and use the experience) of IMPA, I guess. Perhaps this could be connected not only with invitations to Paris, but also with "showcase" formats in Paris - I am thinking of a parallel to the annual Frankfurt Book Fair, which each year has a different "guest of honor" country, where books and authors from that country are presented and get special attention at the Book Fair.

Q: Do you think that countries that are very advanced in mathematics should organize ICMs, or should they be reserved, if possible, for emerging countries/continents in mathematics?

A: Organizing an ICM clearly needs a lot of organization power and experience, and it is also expensive: Thus I would see an ICM not only as an opportunity to display a country's or a region's mathematical advancement and heritage, but also as a huge act of service to the world-wide mathematical community.

Q: What recommendations / advice would you give to the organizers of an ICM?

A: Think of this as a community effort, for huge communities of university researchers and students, teachers and journalists, in Paris, France, and beyond. If there is a large community that is excited and wants the congress, it will be successful.

Q: Do you have suggestions for new actions that would be interesting to undertake around the ICM?

A: I think it would be great to give the major publishers an active role, but also to make sure that they finance it - why not invite "the big ones" to the congress, but also make sure from the beginning that they are expected to pick up the catering bill for the whole congress, but also that the Paris congress will be expected to be an open access milestone (if the transformation hasn't been completed by then). The congress should have a "cost

of knowledge" headline!