

PRESENTATION

*It is for me a great honor to write these introductory remarks to the fundamental book of Ángel Ruiz and Hugo Barrantes on the **History of the Inter-American Committee on Mathematics Education**. We are now commemorating 35 years of its existence. The IACME has served as a bridge between the different realities of the USA and Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean.*

Although the countries of the region are economically and culturally so diverse and, also, politically so different, in the decades following the establishment of the IACME, the organization served important purposes both in Mathematics Education and by giving a necessary political support to fellow mathematicians in the countries under military dictatorship. It is hard to think about Education, in particular about Mathematics Education, removed from the political context. The support given by IACME in those days must be recognized.

Now we come to a different reality, an effective coming together of all the countries of the Americas, with a clear movement towards eliminating discriminatory barriers. We are now working intensively for closer cultural, economical and political relations among all countries of the Americas. In this context the IACME acquires a new importance. The increasing mobility of our populations and the widespread use of Spanish and English in most of the countries are incentives for our coming together to discuss the several issues involved with Mathematics Education. The ideal of the founders of IACME, and a very special mention goes to Marshal Stone, Howard Fehr and Luis Santaló, was this cooperation. We follow their inspiration.

Undoubtedly, the future points to an increasing professional and cultural interchange of the peoples of the Americas. Education, in particular Mathematics Education, must be aware of these new developments. The IACME was founded to offer a forum for us to come together and discuss our common problems, to work for a common understanding among ourselves. Our activities focus on proposing directions and solutions that are useful and possible for all of our countries. This book is a major contribution to all these goals.

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