

Editorial

The present volume 36 of *Geologica Balcanica* is dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Academician Ekim Bončev — the second chief editor of our journal who skillfully assumed the responsibilities of this post for more of 15 years. The volume is also dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the Geological Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Both anniversaries are closely connected, and mark important events in the history of geosciences in Bulgaria.

Founded in 1947, during the first post-war years, the Geological Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences gathered some of the best Bulgarian natural scientists who had specialized in geology at that time. In these times of poverty and ruins, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences became aware of the great needs of a firm scientific basis for the developing mineral resources in this country. Thus, upon the basis of the former Royal Institutes for Natural Sciences housed in the National Natural Sciences Museum, a Geological Institute has been organized. It was headed by Academician Georgi Bonchev (1866–1955), the leading Bulgarian mineralogist and petrographer. Professors Strashimir Dimitrov and Ekim Bončev became his closest collaborators, and respectively, director and deputy director after G. Bonchev's retirement. Ekim Bončev (Corresponding Member in 1947; Full Member in 1961) founded the Department of Geotectonics (has been its head in 1953–1987), and in 1960 became Director (1960–1967) of the Geological Institute.

For sixty years the Geological Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences developed into a complex scientific organization, with a staff of about hundred scientists. Their research is concentrated now in seven departments (Palaeontology, Stratigraphy and Sedimentology; Geotectonics and Re-

gional Geology; Mineralogy; Geochemistry and Petrology; Hydrogeology; Geohazards; Environmental Geotechnics), the Laboratory of Seismotectonics, the Laboratory of Geocollections, and Geological Laboratories (GEOLAB). The Institute has performed important national projects relative to large-scale construction projects and waste disposal sites. The basic research made served as a basis for a number of geological maps including the geological maps of Bulgaria on the scales 1:200 000 (1960–1962) and 1:100 000 (1989–1995), both jointly compiled with the Geological Survey (Committee of Geology) of Bulgaria. A number of important scientific publications in Bulgaria (mostly in *Geologica Balcanica*) and abroad are the basis of the modern knowledge on the geology of Bulgaria. Now this information is in the process of generalization for to be published as a monograph series on the *Geology of Bulgaria*. Such a book has not been published for the last forty years, and becomes now a necessity due to the modern developments in Earth sciences.

The present volume comes also in the beginning of the Triennium of Geosciences (2007–2009) proclaimed by UNESCO and the International Union of Geosciences under the slogan *Geosciences for Society*. The Bulgarian geological community is making considerable efforts, both in the scientific studies on the ten major topics of the scientific programme, and in exposing to the Bulgarian society, — the newest member of the European Union, — the various benefits Bulgaria and the EU may have by using the vast applied resources of the geosciences. Thus, the Geological Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences meets its 60th anniversary with satisfaction of the achieved results in the past, and with resolve to meet successfully the new challenges.

From the Editorial Board