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## Greeting

Vasile Surd

*Organizer the Second International Conference “Rural Space and Regional Development”, Cluj-Napoca, Romania*

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The Second International Conference “Rural Space and Regional Development” took place between September 25-30, 2001 in Cluj-Napoca and Baia Mare, under the patronage of the “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Faculty of Geography and the West University “Vasile Goldiş” in Baia Mare.

The conference was organized to honor and promote the 30<sup>th</sup> International Geography Congress that will take place in Glasgow, UK , in August 2004.

The conference had 157 participants, representing both geography and regional development, out of which 39 were from abroad (Europe, USA, Russia and Israel). The conference started on September 25, 2001, in Cluj-Napoca, in the amphitheatre of the Geography Faculty, where the opening ceremony took place.

Professor Vasile Surd, as the organizer, had the privilege to give the opening speech. Other welcome speeches were given by Prof. Dr. Eng. Vasile Soporan, Governor of the Cluj county(judet), Prof. Dr. Vasile Cristea, Vicerector of the “Babeş-Bolyai” University , Prof. Dr. Pompei Cocean, Dean of the Geography Faculty. The greeting message from the Romanian Geography Society, signed by its president, Prof. Dr. Doc. Grigore Posea was read next.

On the same day, in the Miceşti village, Professor. Vasile Surd, organizer, and his guests had lunch and enjoyed the music played by the famous folk instrument players Dumitru Farcaş(taragot) and Dorel Rohian(accordion).

The actual works of the conference started on September 26, 2001 in Baia Mare, with a plenary session at the Baia Mare State House, and the papers divided into 7 sections, at the West University (Rural economy and long-lasting development, Rural settlements, Rural tourism, Rural population, Systems of settlements, Regional development and Critical rural spaces).

Professor Iosif Covaci supervised the conference in Baia Mare.

We would like to note the exceptional organizational and material effort in which the proceeding took place and the valuable scientific contributions of the participants. We also remind ourselves of the unforgettable dinner under the moonlight at Carunari, the folk show from the Village Museum in Sighetu Marmătiei, the visit at the Cimitirul Vesel(Jolly Cemetery) in Sapaņa, as well as the dinner and folk show offered by the Vadul Izei rural council.

As the organizer of the event, I'd like to thank those who sustained, both morally and materially, the organization of this conference: Prof. Dr. Eng. Vasile Soporan, Governor of the Cluj county, Liviu Bechis, Governor of the Maramures county, Prof. Dr. Aurel Ardelean, Rector of the West University “Vasile Goldis”, Cristian Anghel, Mayor of Baia Mare city, Prof. Dr. Vasile Cristea, Vicerector of the “Babeş-Bolyai” University , Prof. Dr. Eng. Petre Berce, Vicerector of the Cluj-Napoca Technical University , Prof. Dr. Pompei Cocean , Dean of the Faculty of Geography , Eng. Vasile Garboan, Director of the “Napolact” factory Cluj-Napoca, Ec. Ionut Pop, Marketing Director of the “Ursus” Cluj-Napoca, Eng. Ivan Ilarie, General Director of the Agriculture Department of Cluj county, Prof. Vasile Miclauş, Director of the Agriculture Highschool of Turda, Ec. Ionut Neag, Director, “Imprimeria Ardealul”, Cluj-Napoca.

I also thank my colleagues, Prof. Dr. Univ. Nicolae Ciangă and Conf. Dr. Liviu Floca.

Heartfelt thanks go also to the Family of Prof. Univ. Dr. Denaeyer from the Free University of Brussels (U.L.B.) and the Family of Prof. Univ. Dr. Glaser from the Würzburg

University, for the scientific and material support for the conference. The same thanks go to Professor Christian Vandermotten from the Free University of Brussels(U.L.B.), who sent a group of talented young people to the conference, members of the I.G.E.A.T.

Exceptional thanks to my colleague Franz Grief from the Bundesanstalt für Agrarwirtschaft Abteilung Agrarpolitik, Regional Forschung und Landsoziologie of Wien, for the dynamic and competent way in which he conducted the section "Rural development", as well as to my colleague Marta Stauder from the Rural Economy Institute of Budapest for the excellent professional collaboration.

I address special thanks to my doctoral students, who presented valuable scientific contributions to the conference.

I express my gratitude to my colleagues from the Geography Institute of Novi Sad, Professor. Dr. Pavele Tomič, Professor. Dr. Sasa Kičosev and the colleagues at the Geography Institute of Beograd, Dr. Branka Tosič, Dr. Marina Todorovič, Dr. Jasmina Georgeviči, Professor Dr. Tatiana Tkatchenko and Professor Dr. A. Alexeev from the "Lomonosov" University of Moscow, the colleagues from the Firenze University, Italy, Sorbonne V, France and the colleagues from the Sofia University, Bulgaria, Professor. Dr. Vesselin Boiadjev and Professor. Dr. Plamen Patanchevov.

The same thanks go to the colleagues of the University in Lublin, Poland, Professor. Dr. Krzysztof Woiciekowski and Professor. Dr. Stefan Bartoszewski, as well as to John Nicoara, who came from Arizona to express his thoughts and memories of his native village from the heart of the Western Carpathians( Muntii Apuseni)..

I thank Sascha Kern and Martina from Schwieberdingen, Germany, who have honored our conference just before their marriage, with this occasion we wish them Happiness and a Long-Lasting Marriage!

Finally but not last, I deeply thank my young colleague and team worker Vasile Zotic, who began his scientific career by presenting his doctoral thesis during the conference, entitled "Space Organizing and Territorial Arrangement. Mures Corridor between Sebes and Deva". He also typed and adjusted the scientific material of this book.

Cluj-Napoca, 10.04.2003