

## DINNER SPEECH

A. Marco

President of the Parliament of Castilla-La Mancha

First of all, I would like to thank you for your decision to hold this symposium in Spain. This meeting will certainly contribute to the development of science in our country, which currently faces many difficulties.

I would also like to thank you for choosing Toledo as your meeting place. Toledo is the capital of Castilla-La Mancha, one of the 17 autonomic regions in Spain.

During his welcome address, our president mentioned the history of our city. I will not insist on that. I hope that you enjoyed your spare time here and I encourage you to extend your stay in Toledo, wander through our old and beautiful streets and visit our musea.

I would be really pleased if my help contributed in any way to the success of this symposium. Our young region and our young university need to be stimulated by events like these, which will create an appropriate environment for the progress of science.

Taking political decisions is very complex. The organisation of coexistence in a society, with thousands of different interests, thousands of different opinions and hundreds of tensions and positions, sometimes in conflict one with each other, is a really difficult task, at least as complicated as putting the FIRST satellite into orbit.

We politicians do not always make the right decisions, and by no means can satisfy all citizens. Sometimes we even make big errors.

This is the reason why I said before that, if this time we were right and therefore our collaboration contributed in any way to the success of this symposium I would be very pleased. My contribution is by far not as significant as professor Cernicharo claims. He is judging more as a good friend than in an objective way. In any case, I thank him and all of you.

And now to finish, and talking about our region, I would like to mention that Castilla-La Mancha is the home land of Don Quijote. I would like, therefore, to propose something that I know may sound crazy. I doubt somehow that FIRST is the appropriate name for the satellite upon which you have placed so many expectations. FIRST is an acronym; it doesn't look like the kind of name a father would give to his child. Therefore, I'd like to suggest to name it 'Quijote'.

In fact, Don Quijote explored the 'space': the Castilla-La Mancha plains. He interpreted all sort of signals with sufficient imagination to properly understand the reality

around him. In any case, and even if this idea would not be feasible, I wish all of you a successful symposium and a happy stay with us and I sincerely want FIRST to succeed.

Thanks a lot to all of you and I wish you a happy way back home!



Figure 1. The dessert was indeed appropriate for the occasion.