



Javier Garcia Martinez with professors and students of the Faculty of Chemistry, University of Bucharest, Romania.

Creating stronger bonds—Highlights of the visit of IUPAC President to Romania

by Mihaela Florea, Mihaela Matache, and Aurelia Visa

IUPAC plays a vital role in furthering the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by fostering global collaboration. While currently IUPAC membership is limited to a select number of countries, the organization is committed to expanding its reach to involve as many nations as possible. With this in mind, Javier García-Martínez, President of IUPAC, has paid a visit to Romania in May 2023. During the days he stayed with us, he had fruitful and important meetings with representatives of the Romanian Academy and Romanian Chemical Society. In addition, he delivered

an enlightening lecture to students, researchers, and academic staff at the University of Bucharest and he also delivered a plenary lecture at the 8th International Workshop of Materials Physics at the National Institute of Materials Physics, Magurele, Romania.

On 15 May 2023, Javier García-Martínez met Marius Andruh, Vice-President of the Romanian Academy, Bogdan Simionescu, President of the Romanian Chemical Society (RCS), and other eminent scientists from chemical institutions of Romania. García-Martínez provided an overview of IUPAC activities, such as networks, projects, and actions, and introduced the contribution of IUPAC and the field of chemistry to the achievement of the UN SDGs. In particular, he emphasized the importance of expanding the number of IUPAC Adhering Organization to countries that currently



From left: Mihaela Florea, Vlad Chiriac, Marius Andruh, Bogdan Simionescu, Javier Garcia Martinez, Corneliu Radu, and Mihaela Matache.

are not affiliated to IUPAC. He also commented on the importance of expanding the network around the globe and the key role of chemistry education, with special emphasis on IUPAC projects such as *“Systems Thinking in Chemistry for Sustainability: Towards 2030 and Beyond.”* He also stressed the importance of attracting young chemists as new members of IUPAC. The Vice-President of the Romanian Academy, the President of the Romanian Chemical Society, and other representatives of the RCS welcomed the idea of reconnecting Romania to IUPAC and getting more involved in IUPAC programs. It is important to note that the RCS was affiliated to IUPAC in 1921 and organized the 6th IUPAC Congress in Bucharest in 1925. The representatives of the Romanian Chemical Society were pleased to learn about the first steps of Romania's readmission to IUPAC.

On 16 May 2023, the President of IUPAC was warmly welcomed at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Chemistry, and delivered an insightful lecture, chaired by Mihaela Matache, on *“How to reinvent our relationship with the planet at molecular scale,”* based on his research conducted at the Inorganic Chemistry Department, University of Alicante, Spain. In addition, he introduced IUPAC and its main mission and activities and talked about solving global challenges with the tools that science provides and how the IUPAC contributes to this global effort.

In particular, he emphasized that chemistry education is about people, and that science is and will always be a common language for all, regardless of nation. Both the visit and the theme of his lecture were timely since we are still in the UNESCO International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development (IYBSSD) that started in 2022. He also mentioned some existing outreach activities funded by IUPAC, including the Periodic Table Challenge and the Global Women's Breakfast, and invited Romanian senior and young scientists to be an active part of such events. The academic staff, researchers, and students had the great pleasure to listen to his lecture and discuss the possibility of creating a sustainable future for everyone.

On 17 May 2023, the IUPAC President paid a visit to the National Institute of Materials Physics

(NIMP) which fell within the occurrence of the 8th edition of the International Workshop of Materials Physics (IWMP). The main topic *“Advanced Materials and Methods for Heterogeneous Catalysis”* was chaired by Mihaela Florea, Lucian Pintilie, and Cristian Mihail Teodorescu. The aim of the workshop was to share the latest scientific results related to advanced materials and characterization techniques with an emphasis on heterogeneous catalysis. The most exciting recent experimental and theoretical developments in materials synthesis, characterization, and potential applications were presented and discussed. Javier García-Martínez also delivered an invited talk on *“Materials at order-disorder boundary: defect engineering for superior catalytic performance”* during this important workshop, and interacted with professors and students.

The short, but intense visit of the IUPAC President to Romania not only raised the awareness of IUPAC's significance and mission among academic staff and students but also marked the first step to reintegrating Romania into the IUPAC. Furthermore, he also shared the recent advances in the field of Molecular and Materials Chemistry for building a sustainable society with scientists and students. Finally, we sincerely hope that our country will soon rejoin IUPAC and continue to the advancement of chemistry and chemistry education in the world via active involvement in different activities and programs of IUPAC.

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