

Speech by Enrique Zuazua
April 11, 2011
Bilbao City – BCAM agreement signature
BCAM

Enrike Zuazua-ren hitzak
Bilboko udala eta BCAM-en arteko hitzarmenaren
sinaduraren jardunaldia
Apririlak, 11, 2011, BCAM-en

BCAM official language is English. But on this particular occasion I would first like to say a few words in Basque, our own language. Not because it is our only language but because the Basque Country it is the only place on the planet where Basque is a alive and well.

Agintariok, BCAM-eko zuzendaritza batzordeko arduradunak, zientzilaria eta kideok, jaun andreok, ongi etorri BCAM-era eta aldeztu aurretik eskerrak etortzeagatik.

Jada bi urte t'erdi igaro dira BCAM martxan jarri genuenetik. Aurretik, lan ugari egin genuen, Ikerbasqueren eskutik BCAM-en lehenengo behin-behineko plangintza gauzatzeko eta aurreneko kudeatzaile eta ikerlariak kontratatuzko.

BCAM 2008ko irailearen lehenean sortu zen eta ordutik hona hainbat lan egin dugu, egin duzue, eta zuei guztioi esker hemen gaude gaurko ekitaldi berezi honetan.

Newton-ek esan zuen urrunago ikusi bazuen erraldoien lepotikan begiratu izan zuelako izan zela.

Hemen, Euskal Herrian, gauza bera egiten saiatzen ari gara. Gurea eta gure arbasoena den antzinako euskal gizarte eskuzabal eta bikain honen lepotik, etorkizuna begiratu eta jorratu nahian dihardugu Matematika aplikatuaren alorrean.

Bi urte t'erdi hauetan BCAM haziz joan da, proiektu berriak garatuz eta, aldi berean, hasieratik gure plangintzan zeudenak sustatuz.

Zorte handia izan dugu, baina ez dugu sekula ahaztu zortea izateko asko saiatu beharra dagoela, gure Oteizak edo Txillidak esango luketen bezala.

BCAM ez da Unibertsitateko sail bat, ezta teknologi zentro bat ere. BCAM tartean dago, zubi gisa lan egiteko sortua izan zen. BCAM bikaintasuneko ikerketa zentro berria da eta etengabe ari da bere nortasuna lantzen eta garatzen.

Guzti hau zuei esker izan da. Mila esker beraz. Etorkizuna ere, zuekin elkarlanean gauzatzeko beharra

daukagu. Hemen zaudeten guztiok zarete BCAM.

Gaurkoan, Bilboko Udalari ongietorria ematen diogu. Bilbo Euskal Herriaren itxasontzi nagusi gisa, gure herriaren aldaketa gauzaten eta margotzen hasi zen lehendabiziko erakundea izan zen duela 30 urte inguru. Orain bigarren aldaketaren garaia da, zientziarena, eta Matematikarena bereziki. Aurrerantzean Bilbon izango gara, egoitza berrian, Madrileko parlamentuko euskal taldeak guretzat lortu zuen diru laguntza garrantzitsuari ezker. Aurrerantzean, Bilbotik bultzatuko dugu modu apal baina tinkoan zientziaren eta Matematikaren garai berri hau.

Ongietorria Bilbo-ko hiriari BCAM-era eta eskerrik asko hiriari eta bereziki Bilboko udalari, gure zentroa zuen kabian berotasunez onartzeagatik.

Institutional representatives, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us on this special occasion and welcome to the Basque Center for Applied Mathematics.

You, and indeed all of us, have been working hard to make this center grow and become a dynamic and innovative scientific player. Thank you for your generous efforts: Institutional representatives of our General Assembly, Scientific Committee, General Manager, staff, senior researchers, Postdocs, PhD

students, visiting fellows, short term visitors, internship students, ... Thanks to you all.

We have been and continue to be very lucky. From the very beginning we had the full support of the Basque Government under two different administrations, and in particular that of the Department of Education and Research and Ikerbasque, the Basque Foundation for Science, today represented by Pedro Luis Arias, Deputy Minister and President of BCAM, Begoña Ochoa, Director for Science Policy, and by the General Manager of Ikerbasque, Iñigo Atxutegi. We also had the support of Innobasque, the Basque Agency for Innovation and the University of the Basque Country. They are founding members of BCAM and cooperating with them has been and is for us one of our main priorities. I would like to thank the Vicerector of Coordination Juan José Unzilla for being with us today. I would like also to thank Guillermo Ulacia, and Txema Villate, that could not do it to be with us today, President and General Director of Innobasque for their support.

More recently the Bizkaia Regional Government joined BCAM. That was a very good sign, an indicator that the Basque, and in particular Bizkaia province society recognize BCAM as a new and distinguished member of the family. Thank you Iñaki Hidalgo, Izaskun Artetxe and Imanol Pradales, Director of Bizkaia Xede, for your continuous support.

Later we had the full support of the Basque Nationalist Party at the Spanish parliament to obtain vital funding of 6M€ from the Spanish General State Budget 2011, in order to build and shape our new headquarters. Thank you to Jose Ramon Beloki for being with us today and for your enthusiastic support. We will not forget your generosity and we assure you that we will not fail to live up to it.

The City of Bilbao has recently decided to fully support BCAM in this challenging endeavor, and this is the reason for the meeting today.

The City of Bilbao has provided us with access to the new facilities that we will be ready to enjoy as owners in downtown Bilbao in early 2012. This will definitely increase the international visibility of BCAM and will make it more easily accessible to all researchers and society at large. From the very heart of Bilbao we will be well connected to all campuses of the University, to this Technological Park and surrounding industries, and all agents and players in the Basque science and Technology system. Simultaneously our available space will double.

As I said before, we have been very lucky. I would like to underline the very special role that Basque industry has played in the development of BCAM. The Artech Group, Baltogar, Ingeteam, and several others have

understood the role Mathematics can play and have to play. The day when the highest level applied mathematics is ready to cooperate with Basque industry in the most ambitious endeavors, then we will have accomplished one of the main tasks to which BCAM is committed. Thank you Alejandro and Gregorio Moreno for being with us today and for your continuous friendship and support.

Today, we welcome the city of Bilbao to BCAM and we are proud and very honored that Bilbao city is embracing BCAM.

BCAM is not a University Department, nor a Technological Center, but it is here to become a bridge, to cooperate with them. BCAM was launched with the aim of being an innovative research center in applied mathematics, understood in the broadest sense. BCAM belongs to the network of Basque Excellence Research Centers.

Nobody knows what the definition of excellence is but we are all aware of it. We can easily identify some of the ingredients of the excellence BCAM wishes to pursue.

- A transparent and professional governance and management system.
- A strongly committed staff and research

personnel.

- Leadership in identifying topics and research directions and new research projects.
- Capacity to develop these projects through periodic strategic plans.
- Solid pluri-annual funding complemented through competitive grants.
- Strong links with industry and reference international centers.
- Strong commitment to the diffusion of science in society and enhancing the interest of younger students in science.
- A Scientific Committee with the highest standards.

These are some of the ingredients of the formula.

It is now up to all of us to “cook up” a good BCAM.

Mathematics and the Basque Country both deserve it.

Albert Einstein said once: “How can it be that Mathematics, and invention of the human mind, be capable of describing nature so accurately?”

I always felt that this quote sounds like an invitation to do Math. Let's then practice Mathematics then, and enjoy doing it, creating new Mathematics. From now on we are going to do it with a new ally, Bilbao City. Thank you Marta Ajuria, official representative of the Mayor of Bilbao, councillor for the Economy, and Javier Scheiffler, deputy-director of the Economy department, for having made this agreement possible, for believing in and supporting the BCAM project.

Thank you all. Eskerrikasko.