



The Abdus Salam  
International Centre for Theoretical Physics

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Director



**Concluding remarks on the occasion of the visit  
of the President of Italy to ICTP**

**March 27, 2008**

Mr. President:

You have been kind to fit this meeting into your busy schedule, and you have been magnanimous to come to our Center and rename the main building after the inimitable Leonardo da Vinci. Our Centre can now proudly speak of a Leonardo da Vinci Building, a Galileo Galilei Building and an Enrico Fermi Building, all named after some of the greatest Italians. From the beginning, the Leonardo building (as I may now call it) has also been the seat of the Department of Theoretical Physics of the University of Trieste, which played a critical role in the formation of the Centre.

In return for your magnanimity, what can we do but to thank you with empty words? What can one present the President of the Republic who is its highest authority? The only higher authority is the land itself, and I take the liberty of citing from Virgil's "Georgics", Book II, a little piece that extols this land. What Virgil said more than two thousand years ago still holds true. I will read out an English translation but the Latin text will appear on the screen:

"With fruitful flocks and olives...  
Here blooms perpetual spring, and summer here  
In months that are not summer's; twice teem the flocks;  
Twice doth the tree yield service of her fruit...  
Mark too her cities, so many and so proud,  
Of mighty toil the achievement, town after town  
Up rugged precipices heaved and reared,  
And rivers undergliding ancient walls."

Virgil's Georgics, Book II, lines 136+

But yet, we cannot resist the temptation to present a little memento to mark your visit. It is very small but is backed by the largesse of our heart. It is a silver plaque which bears the words shown on the screen:

May I take the liberty of presenting it as a token of our appreciation, on behalf of our Center and its staff, and on behalf of all those present here?

### **Present the plaque and Book**

I now have the pleasure of thanking the heads of scientific institutions in Trieste for their help with this visit, and their dedication to fostering the collaborative spirit that prevails in Trieste; they will understand if I don't name them here.

I also thank the various authorities, in particular:

Presidente della Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia;  
Presidente Consiglio Regionale;  
Vice-Presidente del Consiglio della Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia; Presidente della Provincia di Trieste;  
Sindaco di Trieste; and  
Prefetto di Trieste.

Moreover, I wish to thank, for all the hard work they did the following:

Questore di Trieste,  
The Carabinieri,  
Guardia di Finanza,  
Vigili del Fuoco, and  
Vigili Urbani.

My thanks go to Professor Claudio Magris and Professor Luciano Bertocchi for their roles today, and all the ICTP staff who worked hard to make this a successful event. Without that work, we are an empty shell. I have particular pleasure in recognizing the contributions of Professor Paolo Budinich whose initiative brought Abdus Salam and the Center to Trieste, an important act that led to further changes.

Finally, Mr. President, I would be derelict in my duty if I did not thank the Quirinale for their guidance and help regarding your visit. If we have broken any protocol, it is our fault, not theirs. Thank you once again for coming to us.

*K. R. Sreenivasan*