

Acceptance Speech of

PROFESSOR YURI I. MANIN

Co-Winner of the 2002

King Faisal International Prize for Science

Saturday 9 March 2002 (25 Dhu Al-Hajjah 1422H)

Read by His Excellency

Professor Abd Allah M. Al-Rashed

Rector of King Khaled University

Your Royal Highness, Prince Sultan ibn Abd Al-Aziz
Second Deputy Premier, Minister of Defence and Aviation
And Inspector General
Your Royal Highnesses
Your Excellencies
Distinguished Guests

I am honored and pleased to accept the 2002 King Faisal International Prize for Mathematics.

Since the time of Galileo, mathematics was recognized as the language of nature, and our entire scientific understanding of matter, space-time, and Universe is expressed in this language.

Mathematics also deeply influences the self-perception and everyday life of the modern societies. We rely upon varied technology requiring refined mathematical tools for its creation and development. We permanently gather and process vast amounts of statistical data determining our view of the fast changing world and our place in it. Safely hidden behind user-friendly interfaces, sophisticated mathematics confronts us at each computer screen.

All of this would be unthinkable without efforts put by many generations of thinkers into development of fundamental mathematics, more often than not for the sheer beauty and awesome purity of mathematical thinking. This beauty and purity makes our *métier* akin to that of musicians and philosophers.

The prestigious King Faisal Prize for mathematics is a sign of recognition of importance of this activity. It enhances the public awareness of our efforts and stresses their relevance. I am proud and thankful for this distinction.