

Dear colleagues and guests,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all here in the Rozhen National Astronomical Observatory, to the Balkan Astronomical Meeting!

I can see here our colleagues and friends from Romania, Serbia and MN, Macedonia, Greece, Russia, Hungary, the Czech Rep., Poland, and Bulgaria. Altogether, about 90 participants will attend this Meeting. It is also my pleasure to welcome here the first Bulgarian cosmonaut, Mr. Georgi Ivanov! Mr. G. Ivanov is a sponsor of our Meeting and I would like to thank him very much! This Meeting is organized by the Institute of Astronomy, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, by the Institute of Space Research, BAS, and by the Department of Astronomy of the "St. Kliment Ohridski" University of Sofia.

The Meeting is dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the first light received with the 2-m telescope, to the 25th anniversary of the space flight of the first Bulgarian cosmonaut, Mr. Georgi Ivanov, and to the 110th anniversary of the first Bulgarian astronomical observatory in Sofia, which belongs to the Sofia University.

I wish you all a successful meeting and I am sure, it will provide the basis for a better collaboration in future between our countries in the field of Astronomy!

Dr. Kiril Panov,
director,
Institute of Astronomy, BAS