Dear Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a real pleasure to me to profite of this opportunity to pronounce, in the name of the Hungarian Geological Institute, a hearty welcome to you all, who have accepted our invitation, who are interested in the subject chosen and who will certainly contribute to our effort towards achieving, during these few days of consultations, valuable results of particular use for both science and practice.

I should like to greet first of all the representatives of the Central Office of Geology and the National Water Authority, our sponsors, who have attributed due importance to the idea of this Conference and who have helped us efficiently in bringing it into completion. Thank is due to the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO which has paid attention to our meeting and which has followed with attention our organizatory work since the idea of the Conference has been raised.

I feel indebted to the International Association of Hydrogeologists and, personally, to its President, Mr. S. BUCHAN, and its Secretary General, Mr. L. DURBETTET, who have provided possibility to discuss our special problems together with scientists of international name under the organization and within the frame of this Association. We have also to thank the International Association of Hydrological Sciences and, personally, vice-president Mr. Gy. KOVÁCS, for having allowed the Department of Subsurface Waters of the Association to join us in our work and to widen this way the background of our consultations.

From among the organizers I must mention first of all the name of Professor S. VITÁLIS, who was invited to be Chairman of our Conference and who has participated since the very first day, with very great care and attention, in the preparations for the meeting and whose guiding advices and experiences we could not have dispensed with. Unfortunately, his stubborn disease has kept him stuck to bed for many weeks now, so that he has not been able to attend the meeting. It is in his place that I have to expound now also his ideas.

We have been given valuable assistance by both Hungarian scientific associations interested in our subject, by the Hungarian Geological Society and the Hungarian Hydrological Society. We have been similarly backed by
the Research Institute for Water Resources, the Roland Eötvös Geophysical Institute and some university institutes which have taken part in the elaboration of the selected topics and in the organization of the excursions.

A positive response has been excited among our foreign colleagues and fellow institutions abroad. Hence the relevant papers received from 20 different countries and the preliminary applications we have received from 37 countries. The number of colleagues virtually present is smaller, but it is not low at all. We have received 244 attending members from 36 different countries and 90 foreign members will participate in our excursion.

I must tell you that, beside the formal, collective support provided by associations, societies, colleges and government organizations, we have enjoyed the contributions of countless private individuals and that members on the staff of the Hungarian Geological Institute, themselves, have excelled in enthusiasm and efficient co-operation.

Our subject is the hydrogeology of large basins. The exploitation of subsurface waters rapidly increases all over the world. Beside the utilization of karstic waters it is the aquifers of the large sediment-filled basins that play an increasing role in this domain. We must be able to distinguish, in the water budget and exploitation of these basins, between fossil waters and waters recharged by surface precipitations. To be able to assess the possibilities for infiltration and accumulation of water in aquifers of different permeability and tectonic setting requires from the geologist to get acquainted, in addition to the traditional research tools of geology, with the regularities of rock physics and hydrodynamics. The assessment of the variation of the quality of the water in the water-bearing rocks and on its path of migration underground requires the use of hydrochemical research methods beside hydrodynamic ones. And this need is becoming more and more urgent because of the many kinds of pollutions, natural and artificial, which are threatening the groundwaters as well. Geologists, engineers and specialists in many other fields are getting involved in the investigations of groundwaters gradually increasing in importance. And they are to play a special role in solving the tasks of the international exchange of experiences and in concentrated international efforts.

In the spirit of these ideas I declare the Conference open and wish all guests present a good and successful work with my heartiest greeting and the desire of real hospitality.

DR. J. KONDA
Director of the Hungarian Geological Institute
Chairman of the Organizing Committee