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## Report Presentation

This document is a summary of the first six years of work at the Research Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (Centro de Investigación sobre Ingeniería Genética y Biotecnología (CIIGB) from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).

It presents different aspects of its organization, research lines, technology development, teaching and training of skilled staff.

The CIIGB was created in April 1982, as a decree by Dr. Octavio Rivero Serrano, Rector at that time of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). The construction of the physical facilities at Cuernavaca, Mor., were finished in December 1984 and the academic personal began working in January 1985. These facilities were officially inaugurated in August of the same year by the President of México, Miguel De la Madrid Hurtado, together with the Rector of UNAM, Dr. Jorge Carpizo MacGregor.

The first two and half years were dedicated to three main tasks: first, to define the main fields of research, technological development, teaching and training; second, to design the physical facilities at Cuernavaca and procure funds to equip them; third, to select new academic staff and to shape the graduate curricula in specific areas. The former activities were developed according to a Document written by the Internal Counsel of the Center. The written plan lays down the academic foundations of the Center for the short and long term.

The first year in Cuernavaca was dedicated to the installation of the equipment, as well as to the initiation of academic work and hiring of academic staff. Academic work was in full swing by 1986.

CIIGB started activities with a Research Staff of nine. Today, in 1988 there are 24 reserches working in 14 researche groups. The Research Staff is assisted by 29 academic technicians adn 80 students (45 of them, postgraduates). This implies that the Center can still incorporate more Academic Staff since it has been planned for 200 individuals. The objeive in due time, is to duplicate the number of Research Staff.

According to studies made by a group of experts from the United Nations Industrial Development Program, the Research Center has adequate space to accomodate 35-40 researchers. There is confidence that this objeive will be achieved.

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The academic endeavour of the Center has been developed according to the general objectives that made possible its creation, which are:

1. To gather fundamental knowledge in biology within the Center's fields of competence;
2. To create the needed mechanisms to apply fundamental knowledge in order to generate biotechnologies;
3. To foster a liason between the University and the country's private sector through proposals allowing the use of biological technologies;
4. To participate in the decentralization of research, higher education and training of specialized human resources.

Even though the CIIGB is a young Institution, it has made contributions in basic and applied research technological development as well in the areas of teaching and trining. However, we believe this is just the beginning, as the existing research groups are consolidated and new groups incorporated in selected fields, the contributions of the Center will be of a larger magnitude.

It is important to mention that the Center's main effort in the scope of basic and applied research lies in the study of specific projects, within disciplines such as molecular biology, biochemistry, microbiology and bioengineering.

The area of protein biotechnology is the central core for technological developlent. In fact, four out of six transfered tecnologies and seven out of eight patents registered or under review are protein biotechnology projects, including the production of unicellular protein, the use of enzymes in biocatalysis, the use of proteic components from scorpion venoms for selective labeling, the overproduction of specific proteins, etc.

Correspondingly, the incorporation of new research groups should contemplate this general scheme and incorporate new ideas in the study and handling of proteins without leaving out the effort in molecular genetics, microbiology, fermentation engineering, and development of bioprocesses.