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Director - President-Elect

The CMS has recently gone through a challenging and demanding period, marked by investigations, the resignation of several highly respected and devoted members, and the subsequent establishment of both the HR Committee and the Governance Reform Committee (GRC). Since rejoining the Executive Committee last year, I have had the privilege of attending some GRC meetings and serving as a non-voting member of the HR Committee. This experience has given me a close view of the extraordinary dedication, care, and integrity with which the members of these committees have carried out their work. They have devoted an immense amount of time, energy, and thoughtful effort, often under difficult circumstances, to ensure that the CMS remains on a strong and principled path, while also laying the groundwork for a resilient and promising future.

As I stand at the threshold of beginning my mandate as President of the Society, I feel a deep sense of gratitude and admiration, and I would like to express my most sincere and heartfelt thanks to the members of the GRC: Timothy L. Alderson (Chair), Dave Oakden, and Kseniya Garaschuk; and to the members of the HR Committee: Joy Morris (Chair), Andrea Burgess, Adèle Bourgeois, and Matilde Lalin. Their commitment, generosity, and unwavering sense of responsibility to the community are truly inspiring, and the Society is profoundly fortunate to have benefited from their leadership and service.

I would also like to express a very special and heartfelt appreciation to Dave Oakden for his remarkable service as Treasurer over the past fifteen years. Through multiple renewals, each of which he graciously accepted, he has provided continuity, stability, and wisdom at the heart of the Society's operations. As his current term comes to an end this December, it is difficult to overstate the depth of our collective gratitude. We very much hope that he might be willing to continue sharing his wisdom and experience with the Society. His dedication and generosity have left a lasting and meaningful imprint on the CMS.

The Society owes an immense debt of gratitude to all of these individuals. Their generosity of time, their sense of duty, and their steadfast commitment have guided the CMS through a difficult chapter and positioned it for a strong and enduring future. In this brief note, I would like to share my understanding of some important issues that fall beyond the mandate of the above-mentioned committees (at least for the time being), but which, in my view, require careful and timely attention for the well-being and future of the Society.

The revenue generated by the *Canadian Journal of Mathematics (CJM)* and the *Canadian Mathematical Bulletin (CMB)* is fundamental to the Society. Since their publication has been handled by Cambridge University Press (CUP) beginning in 2020, revenue has fluctuated, with an overall downward trend. At the same time, there is a clear and growing expectation that both journals will transition to full open access in the near future. At the most recent Board meeting, a target date of 2028 was proposed by CUP for CMB; however, this timeline was not fully endorsed and remains under discussion. Nevertheless, the broader shift toward open access appears inevitable and brings with it significant challenges.

In 2025, 144 articles were published in CMB and 128 in CJM. Under the current transformative agreement, only 34% of CMB articles and 44% of CJM articles were published as open access. These figures are concerning for several reasons. First, they suggest that nearly 60% of accepted papers are authored by researchers affiliated with institutions that do not have agreements with CUP. A transition to full open access therefore risks losing a substantial portion of our contributor base. If we are unable to attract a sufficient number of submissions from authors at institutions with existing agreements, CJM and CMB could face a rapid decline in submissions. Then, with lower turnout, the resulting meager revenue would largely be absorbed by CUP to cover publication costs and may not even suffice to do so.

In such a scenario, the Society may be forced to consider difficult alternatives. One possibility would be the merger of CJM, CMB, and CMC into a single journal. Another would be to move toward a fully in-house, online-only publication model, especially given the sharp decline in demand for printed copies, which are likely to be phased out entirely. A further concern is that, in the face of declining submissions, editorial boards may come under pressure to lower acceptance standards, an outcome that would be deeply undesirable and contrary to the values of the journals. In short, this is a very real and imminent challenge, one that has the potential to affect not only a primary source of CMS revenue, but also the reputation and long-standing excellence of its flagship publications.

The next item concerns our meetings. Discussions about the number and format of meetings each year, as well as the level of registration fees, are not new; these concerns have been raised repeatedly by colleagues across the community. For many years, the CMS has maintained the tradition of holding two annual meetings: a winter meeting, typically hosted in major Canadian cities, and a summer meeting, organized in other regions of the country. Both have played an important role in fostering interaction and collaboration among Canadian mathematicians at all career stages, from students to senior researchers. There have been suggestions to move toward a single annual meeting, rotating across the country. However, responding to such proposals is not straightforward, particularly given the diversity of perspectives involved. From what I understand, members of the Society tend to focus on the timing, costs, and scientific value of these gatherings, while the CMS office, among other things, must also carefully consider the financial implications, including the risk of budget deficits. In addition, consolidating the current winter and summer meetings into a single, larger event could place significant organizational strain on the office, given its limited staff and resources. The question of how best to structure our meetings is also closely connected to the broader role of Canadian mathematical institutes, which I will address in the next item. In light of all these considerations, it would be prudent for the CMS to establish an ad hoc committee tasked with examining this issue in depth and providing thoughtful recommendations for the years ahead.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to address the Society's most valuable asset: its dedicated members. Many colleagues volunteer their time and energy to serve on committees and contribute to the work of the CMS, often without any form of compensation. Their commitment reflects a deep sense of responsibility and care for the community, and it deserves to be recognized with the utmost respect and appreciation. It is therefore disheartening to learn, for example, that a colleague was unaware that their committee mandate had concluded, only to discover that their name had simply been removed from the website. Even small gestures, such as a thoughtful message at the end of a mandate, can make a meaningful difference and convey genuine appreciation. Such practices should become standard. Committee chairs, in particular, who carry significant responsibility, merit even more explicit recognition for their leadership and service. More broadly, the CMS needs to strengthen how it celebrates and honors its members. As an example, some of the Society's awards, while important in principle, could be elevated in their visibility and presentation to better reflect the distinction they represent. Investing in recognition, whether through communication, acknowledgment, or celebration, is not merely symbolic; it is a meaningful and lasting investment in the vitality, cohesion, and future of the Society. In this respect, there is clear room to do more, and to do better, in ensuring that members feel valued, respected, and genuinely appreciated for their contributions.

The Canadian mathematical institutes: PIMS, the Fields Institute, CRM, AARMS, and BIRS (with its distinctive model and mission), stand as remarkable pillars of research activity and intellectual life across the country. Their collective impact on Canadian mathematics is profound and truly inspiring. Day after day, from coast to coast, these institutes sustain a vibrant and continuous stream of seminars, workshops, thematic programs, and conferences. Through these efforts, they not only bring together colleagues from their respective regions, but also attract leading researchers from around the world, significantly elevating the international visibility and reputation of Canadian mathematics. Their dedication, vision, and organizational excellence have created an environment in which mathematical ideas circulate freely and collaborations flourish. The breadth, consistency, and quality of their programming are extraordinary, and their contributions to nurturing both established researchers and the next generation of mathematicians cannot be overstated. Canadian mathematical life is, in many ways, shaped and amplified by their leadership and initiative.

At the same time, one natural consequence of this rich and continuous level of activity is that the landscape in which the CMS operates has evolved. With such a dense network of high-level weekly seminars and conferences taking place throughout the year, there is an increasing need to rethink and adapt the structure of the CMS annual meetings to better align with this new reality, a process that remains to be fully realized. In parallel, there is a clear opportunity, and indeed a need, for the CMS to strengthen its alignment and collaboration with these institutes. In 2021, I proposed the creation of an Institutes Committee within the CMS, with the aim of coordinating and representing Canadian mathematical life at major international events such as the Joint Mathematics Meetings (JMM), the International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM), the European Congress of Mathematics (ECM), and the Mathematical Congress of the Americas (MCA). At that time, the Executive Director of the AMS engaged directly with the CMS, attending meetings and even participating in the summer meeting in St. John's, to encourage and facilitate CMS involvement in the JMM. Although the committee did not continue beyond my mandate and the CMS did not move forward with joining the JMM, the institutes themselves advanced with admirable initiative and cohesion, jointly establishing a partnership with the AMS to participate in the JMM. This development is a testament to their dynamism, foresight, and commitment to advancing Canadian mathematics on the global stage. Their ability to act collectively and decisively in support of international engagement is deeply impressive. I have great admiration for their leadership, and I sincerely hope that in the coming years we will see even stronger collaboration among all Canadian mathematical organizations. By working together more closely, we can further enhance the international presence, influence, and recognition of Canadian mathematics worldwide.

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