

## **FOREWORD**

*The Fourth European Coal Conference was one of the most prestigious geological events in Poland in 2000 year and proved a big success with almost 100 delegates attending from many countries of Eastern and Western Europe. It followed events held previously in Ismir (1997), Prague (1995), and Leicester (1993). The Conference was devoted to a wide spectrum of coal geology, from prospecting and exploration, to energy policies and environmental impacts, and provided an opportunity for geologists to discuss both the current challenges facing the coal industry and its future within Europe.*

*The Upper Silesian Branch of the Polish Geological Institute was chosen as the organizer of the Conference. In response to circulars, one hundred abstracts of papers and posters have been received. During the Conference, over fifty papers were presented in six thematic sessions and three key lectures were presented at the Plenary Sessions. Two of the Conference sessions centred on the evaluation of CBM resources and the thermal history of various basins. Other sessions covered coal resources, coal bearing formations, petrography and geochemistry, and finally, the environmental protection. The papers were accompanied by almost thirty posters.*

*Two geological excursions were run before and after the Conference. Conditions of hard coal exploitation and its environmental impact in the Upper Silesian Coal Basin were the topics of the first excursion. During the excursion, there were presented geology of Carboniferous coal deposits, underground mining activity, utilization technologies of mining waters and mining-caused subsidence. The topic of the second excursion was geology of the Bełchatów Lignite Deposit and environmental impact of exploitation. There were presented geology of Tertiary lignite deposits in Central Poland, exploration, large open-pit-geology, by-products, and environmental protection.*

*In opinion of the Organizing Committee, the Fourth European Coal Conference should be considered as the success. So it has been, at least, heard from the participants, and we gladly believe in it.*

*The ORGANIZING COMMITTEE*