BEFIB2012 – an overview

In 19 to 21 of September 2012, in the Vila Flor Cultural Centre of Guimarães City, Portugal, was held the 8th RILEM International Symposium on Fibre Reinforced Concrete: Challenges and opportunities (BEFIB2012), an event Co-sponsored by ***fib***. After a peer review process, 122 extended abstracts and full papers were selected and published in the proceedings, and participants from 36 countries in representation of 123 institutions were attended BEFIB2012, leading to a total number of attendants of about 150. New emergent areas on the fibre reinforced concrete (FRC), such is the case of "Nanofibers in FRC" and "Innovative structural systems" were promoted in order to enlarge the forum to new **challenges and opportunities** that is the subtitle of the BEFIB2012. A clear tendency for a significant research effort on the "Mechanical properties" and "Long term properties and durability" of FRC that forms about 50% of the accepted publications.

The opening ceremony had the participation of Prof. György Balázs (President of ***fib***), Drª Francisca Abreu (in representation of the President of the Guimarães' local Government), Prof. Paulo Pereira (President of the School of Engineering of Minho University), Prof. Paulo Lourenço (Director of ISISE) and Prof. Joaquim Barros (Chairman of the BEFIB2012). Prof. György Balázs (Figure 1) has remarked the initiatives of ***fib*** for the technical and scientific development of FRC.

The BEFIB2012 was composed by 20 Sessions of 20 minutes for each presentation including about 5 minutes for discussion. The high technical/scientific level of the publications, and especially the enthusiastic and fruitfully discussion occurred during the presentations was highly remarked by the attendants at the final of the conference. Prof. Marco di Prisco and Prof. Barzin Mobasher have given two brilliant keynote lecturers that had an extraordinary contribute for the motivation and enthusiasm of the attendants, and for the scientific quality of the BEFIB2012.

In the closing ceremony, the Chairman presented the graphic of Figure 2 followed by these words "*I have the expectative that the experience and knowledge derived from being working with FRC for about 20 years are capable of contributing to my human performance, like the effect of fibre reinforcement in cement based materials: increase the period of time between damage initiation and peak performance; increase the energy absorption capacity in the softening phase of my life, and delay as much as possible the lost of load carrying capacity with some residual strength capacity.*"

Figure 1 – Prof. György Balázs in the opening ceremony in representation of ***fib***

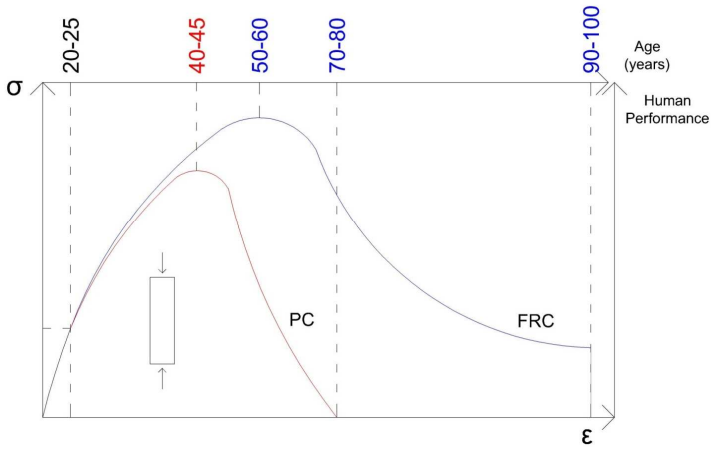

Figure 2 – Analogy of fibre reinforcement vs human performance: PC-plain concrete

The closing ceremony has ended with the announcement of the chairman of next BEFIB organization, Prof. Nemkumar (Nemy) Banthia, which in 2016 will receive in Vancouver, with the enthusiasm reflected in the photo of Figure 3, the FRC community interested in presenting the most recent advances in this extraordinary material.

Figure 3 – The happiness of the Chairman of BEFIB2012 (Prof. Joaquim Barros, right) of having the consciousness that the organization of BEFIB2016 will be a success (Prof. Nemy Banthia, left).