

Message from the President – 15th of March 2016

Dear Members of ISSMGE,
Dear Colleagues,

Last time I wrote a message for your attention in the ISSMGE Bulletin was nearly one year ago.

In the meantime, the ISSMGE and geotechnical activities throughout the world have developed satisfactorily.

As planned, our five **Regional Conferences** on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering took place in 2015 and all of them were very successful. The following reports can be found in the issues of the ISSMGE Bulletin:

- for the XVI **African** Regional Conference in Hammamet, Tunisia, see:

http://issmge2014.ust.hk/~issmge/aug2015/3a.Conference_Report.pdf

- for the XVI **European** Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom, see:

http://issmge2014.ust.hk/~issmge/oct2015/4a.Conference_report_ECSMGE.pdf

- for the 15th **Asian** Regional Conference in Fukuoka, Kyushu, Japan, see:

http://issmge2014.ust.hk/~issmge/feb2016/5a.Conference_report_1.pdf

The reports for the 12th **Australia and New Zealand** Conference in Wellington, New Zealand and for the XV **Pan American** Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina, should also be published very soon.

We are now already in the process of preparing for the 19th International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (19th ICSMGE) which will be held next year in Seoul, 17-22 September 2017. The call for abstracts has been launched earlier this year and the Members Societies are now asked to forward them to the Conference Organising Committee by the end of May 2016. The format of the Conference will be very similar to the 18th ICSMGE Paris, September 2013. After two days of plenary sessions, there will be two days of parallel sessions. In the plenary sessions, 11 Technical Committees of the ISSMGE (TCs) have requested and been given slots in which to deliver original Honours Lectures. These can be seen in the conference programme (http://www.icsmge2017.org/program/program_01.asp). The parallel sessions will be organised by the TCs themselves either in the form of Discussion Sessions (dealing with the written contributions sent by the Members Societies) or in the form of Workshops (proposed and organised by the TCs).

There are now a total of 14 ISSMGE Honours Lectures under the responsibility of the corresponding TCs (see: <http://www.issmge.org/en/awards/honour-lectures>) and these lectures often feature within conferences organised by the TCs or in other speciality events. The most recent Honours Lecture created (February 2016) is the John Burland Lecture proposed by the TC306 on Geo-Engineering Education.

The Board of the ISSMGE, together with the Chairs of the Board Level Committees met in September 2015 in Edinburgh, on the occasion of the XVI European Conference, hosted by the British Geotechnical Association (BGA) and then in Phoenix (Arizona) in February 2016 on the occasion of the Geo-Structures Congress of the ASCE, hosted by the Geo-Institute (the US Member Society).

The Council of the ISSMGE held its mid-term meeting in Edinburgh on Sunday 13th September 2016, the day before the opening of the European Conference. Currently there

were 89 Member Societies and 72 of them were allowed to vote. Unfortunately in the meeting only 52 Members Societies were present or represented (through proxies). The main decisions taken were:

- the life of a Technical Committee of the ISSMGE is no more linked to the presidential term of office (the corresponding amendment to bylaw 16.1 was voted unanimously);
- to accept the new Cooperation Agreement for the FedIGS (Federation of the International Geo-Engineering Societies) which confirms a much lighter structure than the one envisaged in the initial agreement in 2007 (there were 42 votes in favour, 6 against and 4 abstentions).

Since the Council meeting a 90th Member Society has joined the ISSMGE: the Algerian Geotechnical Society (ALGEOS). Warm welcome to the ALGEOS: we are very pleased to have you with us!

During this last year the ISSMGE has pursued its strong commitment (“battle”!) for Open Access to geotechnical literature. More and more often the organisers of geotechnical conferences are encouraged to negotiate with the publishers of the proceedings so that free access to all the papers is allowed through an appropriate electronic link or through uploading on the ISSMGE website. It can be anticipated that the corresponding resources on our website will increase sharply in the coming years. It is one of the reasons for which we are presently in the process of redesigning the ISSMGE website. This work is done under the leadership of the Innovation and Development Committee, chaired by Dimitrios Zekkos. We shall have more news about this action very soon now.

Allow me to encourage you strongly to look at the series of Webinars which are on the ISSMGE website (see: <http://www.issmge.org/en/resources/recorded-webinars>). There are 5 more webinars delivered by: Prof. Richard Jardine, Prof. An-Bin Huang, Prof. George Gazetas, Prof. Samuel I.K. Ampadu and Prof. Lyesse Laloui. We are truly grateful to our colleagues who accept to devote their time to the ISSMGE and share their knowledge with us in an outstanding manner.

A lot of effort has also been devoted in 2015 by the Corporate Associates Presidential Group, chaired by Sukumar Pathmanandavel and the Technical Oversight Committee, chaired by Pierre Delage in order to discuss and hopefully narrow the gap between the state of practice and the state-of-the-art in geotechnical engineering. In particular, a very successful break-out session was organised in Edinburgh between ISSMGE TCs and CAs representatives. A companion message from Sukumar and Pierre, summarising the various actions in 2015, is included in the April 2016 issue of the ISSMGE Bulletin.

I wish to all of you the best in your geotechnical activities and... in your other activities!

Roger Frank
15th March 2016