

## Future of ISSMGE : Celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> ISSMGE Anniversary

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During the Sixth International Congress on Environmental Geotechnics which was held in New Delhi from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> November 2010, ISSMGE celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. During the ceremony, Professor Pedro Seco e Pinto opened the ceremony, Professor Jean Louis Briaud, our president, talked about the present of ISSMGE, Professor Kenji Ishihara talked about the past of ISSMGE and a young member, Dr Imen Said from Tunisia (North Africa) talked about the future of ISSMGE. Dr Imen SAID is a member of SYMPG, the North Africa coordinator of ISSMGE bulletin and an active member of Tunisian Society for Soil mechanics. It is a nice opportunity given to a young member to participate to such a great event. Dr Imen SAID is the first young member who obtained a grant from ISSMGE foundation. The Tunisian Society for Soil Mechanics (ATMS) has also provided financial support to the young member to attend such an important ceremony.

ISSMGE takes its origins at the 1936 International Conference held in Cambridge-Massachusetts. Comparing 2010 with 1935 would indicate how far the ISSMGE has progressed! eg countries actively involved, member numbers, communication tools, knowledge base and how shared. In another 75 years, the ISSMGE will no doubt be very different from what it is now: More members, countries actively involved etc... What we have now provides a solid foundation for the future.

The main future objective of ISSMGE is to become a leader and a major actor in the Geotechnical world environment. The ISSMGE future strategy is based on many axis such as be an active and effective society in geotechnical areas, promote the Young members role and activity in the society, work strongly with developing countries to improve and reinforce their contribution in the Geotechnical Research and industrial fields...

The existence of SYMPG as an index of youth participation in the management of the student and young members' affairs is a very good news for the future of ISSMGE. SYMPG which is the Student and Young Members Presidential Group is composed of 18 young members (< 35 years old) coming from the six main regions in the world (Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, North America and South America). The aim of this group is to contribute, to promote and to the progress of our international society. The idea behind the creation of such a group is to give a chance to students and young members to invoice their opinion and innovative ideas to improve the future of ISSMGE and make it more attractive.

During the ceremony, the young member talked about the future of ISSMGE regarding some particular axis such as: membership and extension of ISSMGE, communication, Technical committees, conferences and forums, geotechnical research and engineering work and developing countries.

### MEMBERSHIP AND EXTENSION OF ISSMGE

In the future, geotechnical engineering knowledge will be developed and promoted in all countries by building ISSMGE branches in social networks; number of members, number of countries, and number of societies will increase. Besides, Student and younger member membership in ISSMGE will grow, allow better communication between members, highlight opportunities and will encourage learning and technical knowledge sharing. Thus, young members knowledge (future of ISSMGE) will be developed. Encouragement of young members will also ensure growth of the ISSMGE in the midterm future.

### COMMUNICATION

Communication will be improved between ISSMGE members especially in countries not well represented in our society. Besides, geotechnical specialists all over the word will receive correspondence and information from the ISSMGE (such as the ISSMGE Bulletin, emails from the President etc), and become active ISSMGE members. Moreover, mailing lists of all members/Young members will be easily used and multimedia communication methods will be developed along (blog, google group, facebook, Twitter..).

In the same context, ISSMGE Website will be improved; that means that it will be easy to use, including complete contents and activity and will be properly described. It will also include RSS news subscription, members' blogs and forums. Thus, ISSMGE members will be able to access to geotechnical knowledge resources of successful universities to improve the level of the global geotechnical knowledge, and declare their demands directly to the society as well as the society can.

Furthermore, it is hoped in the next future that all young members around the world find same facilities to send their message (especial investigation results, geotechnical pictures, educational videos) to the other members simply and inquire their geotechnical questions easily via geotechnical forum.

### TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

Technical committees will continue to involve and be created or updated to reflect the changing nature and new challenges that will be faced by geotechnical engineers by including specific guidelines and requirements. Besides, technical committees action items will be developed and manage technical conferences more than before. They also will be better represented in the ISSMGE bulletin, regional events or board meeting.

### WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS

Forums will launch appropriate spaces in ISSMGE website or network societies about geotechnical questions. Besides, workshops on geotechnical teaching methodology will be created. Moreover, ISSMGE will increase collaboration with industry and institutes of higher learning (e.g. organize seminars, lectures, speaker program, internships, co-ops, R&D projects, organizational member committee). Regarding activities of young members, regional YGECs will be more promoted.

### GEOTECHNICAL RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING WORK

First, database of current and potential research projects and publications will be developed in the future as well as accreditation body to certify geotechnical engineers worldwide. Database of geotechnical soil profiles across the globe will also be developed. Second, motivation mechanisms (e.g. publishing the best communication seminars, prizes for best researchers, best presentations) will be created. Then, technical visits to great geotechnical projects will be organized. Besides, focus on fundamentals will be increased with understanding of real-world project progression.

### ISSMGE AND DEVELOPPING COUNTRIES

ISSMGE will be promoted in all developing countries and less active national societies especially in African region and middle east countries. Conferences will be encouraged (sponsoring) in developing countries as well as countries that cannot participate in ISSMGE activities; they will be identified and then helped. In this way, financial support for students to attend conferences/events will be provided. Finally, geotechnical research works will be supported in developing countries as well as geotechnical engineering knowledge by building ISSMGE branches in social networks.

To fulfill all this work, all regions and members societies have to work together for a better future of ISSMGE.



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From left to right (Prof Jean Louis BRIAUD, Prof Kenji ISHIHARA, Dr Imen SAID)



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Presentation of the Future of ISSMGE by Dr Imen SAID