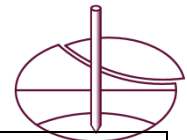


**ISSMGE FOUNDATION
REPORT ON CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE**

Your Name: Ibrahim Mashhour, Ph.D., P.Eng.	Your Organization: Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AAST), Egypt.	Date of report: May 2023
Conference Title: 8 th International Conference on Unsaturated Soils “Towards Unsaturated Soils Engineering”	Location of Conference: Milos Island, Greece	Dates of Conference: 2-5 May 2023
What you learned: The conference addressed so many different areas and revealed various detailed information, providing a wealth of knowledge in areas related to unsaturated soil mechanics. The most significant aspects that I learned fall under the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Challenges and innovation in unsaturated soil mechanics testing and data interpretation.- Consideration of the effect of wetting stress on moisture-change-induced volume change.- Effect of climate change on unsaturated soil behaviour (rain patterns and intensity, temperature change, soil-plant interactions.... etc).- Lessons learned from various case studies.- Limitations in the commonly used measurement techniques for unsaturated soil parameters.- Different approaches of teaching unsaturated soil mechanics to undergraduate students.		
People you met: I was fortunate to meet several pioneers, researchers and practitioners at this conference, and had many useful discussions. Among the people I was honoured to meet: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Prof. Micheal Bardanis, President of the Hellenic Geotechnical Society HSSMGE - Conference Chair, Greece.- Prof. Claudia Zapata, Associate Professor, Arizona State University, AZ, USA.- Prof. Apiniti Jotisankasa, Associate Professor at Kasetsart University, Thailand.- Dr. Tiago Gaspar, Lecturer at the University of Sheffield, UK.- Eng. Mario Schulz-Poblete, Geotechnical Engineer at GaGe Consulting, South Africa.		
Main features of conference and Your comments on the conference: The conference sessions addressed very complex and detailed issues related to unsaturated soil mechanics. Nevertheless, having presenters and attendees from different backgrounds (researchers and practitioners) provided an excellent balance between theory and practice. This can be clearly noticed from the themes of the sessions as well as presentations titles. The organizers did a very good job putting together this even in such an excellent order, where the conference was preceded by introductory courses for non-specialists, and the sessions' themes were put in such clever order, from theoretical aspects to applied aspects to case studies and historical lessons, and finally field visits.		



Please attach short report (maximum 400 words) suitable for publication in the ISSMGE Bulletin:

The UNSAT2023 Conference was a top notch integrated conference on unsaturated soil mechanics. Held at Milos Island “The Island of Bentonite” and hosting renowned pioneers and practitioners in the unsaturated soil mechanics field. The conference had attendees from different parts of the world and addressed various theoretical and practical topics, such as:

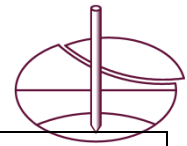
- Fundamental Soil Behavior
- The effect of climate change on the environment and infrastructure through unsaturated soil behavior
- Advances in testing techniques, methods and equipment
- Unsaturated soil mechanics in the preservation and pathology of historic monuments
- Slope stability & landslides
- Foundations

The keynote speeches were outstanding and the panel discussion addressed very important controversial issues for teaching unsaturated soil mechanics to university students.

The parallel sessions were very professionally managed and most of the presenters provided detailed information and insights on their research and findings. The conference sessions addressed very complex and detailed issues related to unsaturated soil mechanics. Nevertheless, having presenters and attendees from different backgrounds (researchers and practitioners) provided an excellent balance between theory and practice. This can be clearly noticed from the themes of the sessions as well as presentations titles.

The organizers did a very good job putting together this even in such an excellent order, where the conference was preceded by introductory courses for non-specialists, and the sessions' themes were put in such clever order, from theoretical aspects to applied aspects to case studies and historical lessons, and finally field visits. During the conference many social events and discussions took place at various occasions, enriched our knowledge and helped sharing experience.

It was indeed an outstanding and enriching experience and the lessons learned from this conference will have a remarkable impact on myself and hopefully on my entire research team at my home institute. Would like to thank the ISSMGE Foundation Trustees for the generous award and would like to express my sincere gratitude to the conference organizing committee as well for offering a complimentary registration.



Photographs from Conference: Insert here or attach to email



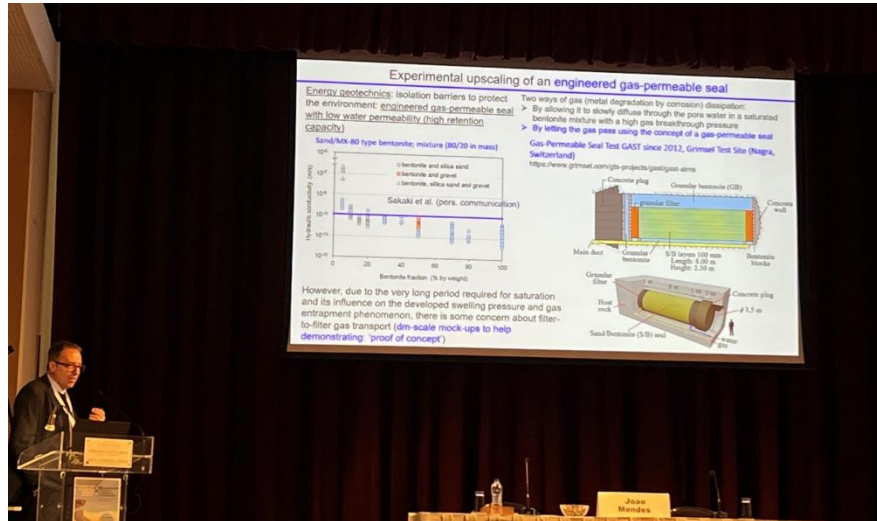
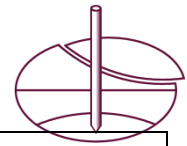
Prof. Michael Bardanis: Conference Opening Speech

Opening Session Chairs: Michael Bardanis, George Belokas



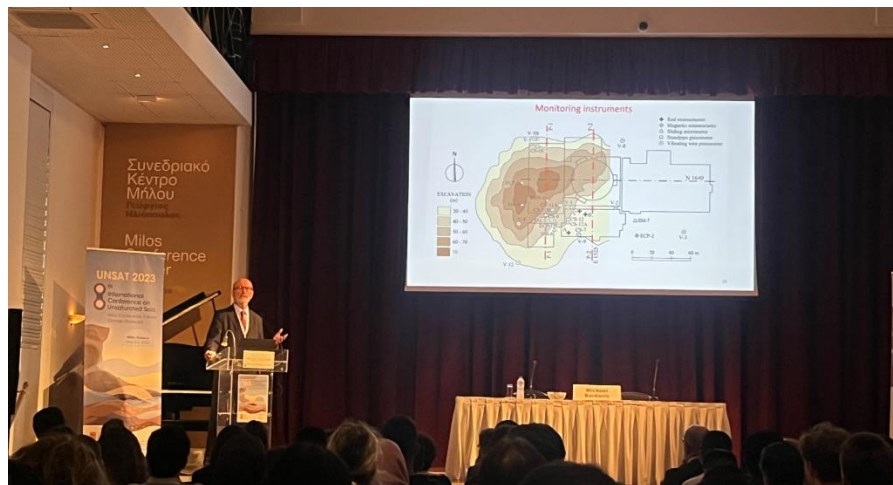
Prof. Sandra Houston Delivering the First Keynote Lecture at the Conference

(Special Themed Lecture: A Unified Two Independent Stress Variable Approach to Moisture-Change-Induced Unsaturated Soil Volume Change, Sandra Houston, Xiong Zhang)



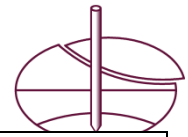
Prof. Enrique Romero Delivering a Keynote Lecture at the Conference

(Special Themed Lecture: New challenges in experimental unsaturated soil mechanics. Experimental upscaling of an engineered gas-permeable seal - Enrique Romero, Clara Alvarado, Antonio Lloret)



Prof. Eduardo E. Alonso Delivering a Keynote Lecture at the Conference

(The 3rd Blight Lecture: The positive history of an error. Modelling the heave of a nuclear power station - Eduardo E. Alonso)



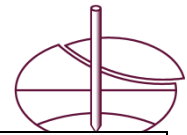
Prof. John S. McCartney Delivering a Keynote Lecture at the Conference

(Special Themed Lecture: Modeling seismic compression of unsaturated soils in the funicular regime - John S. McCartney, Dellena Kinikles)



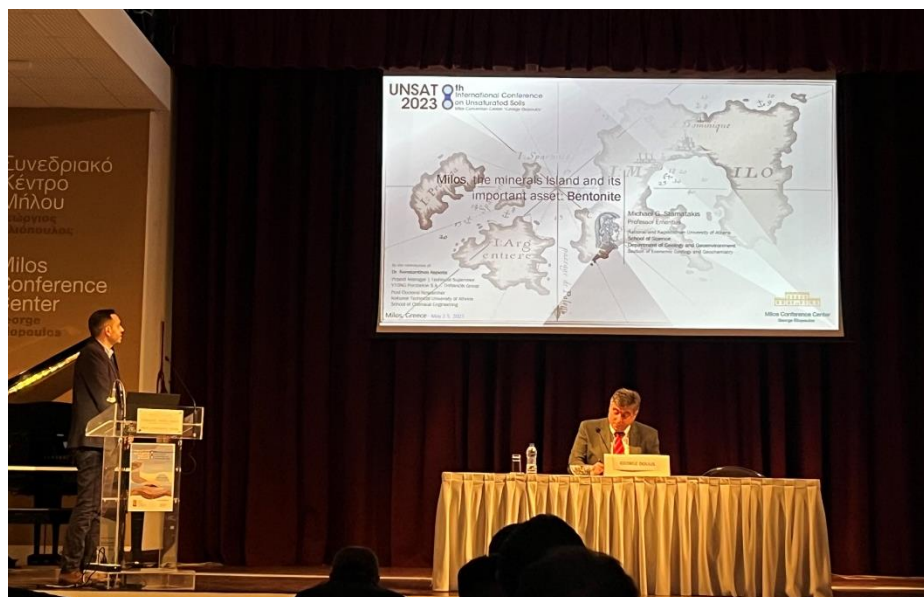
Prof. Claudia Zapata Presenting a Paper at the Conference

(Evolution of Water Retention Characteristics in Bio-Geochemically Altered Unsaturated Soils: A Pore-Scale Study - Sina Nassiri, Claudia Zapata, Nariman Mahabadi)

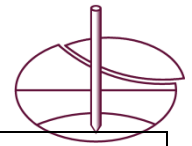


**A panel discussion chaired and moderated by Marina Pantazidou
Panelists: Sandra Houston - John McCartney - Alessandro Tarantino**

(Unsaturated Soil Mechanics instruction: Guiding the non-specialist instructor)



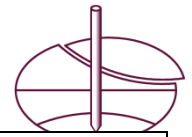
**Special Themed Lecture: Milos, the minerals island and its important asset: Bentonite -
Michael Stamatakis**



In front of the conference venue (Milos Convention Centre)



With Micheal Bardanis - President of the Hellenic Geotechnical Society and Conference Chair



With Mario Schulz-Poblete (Geotechnical Engineer at GaGe Consulting, South Africa)