# ISSMGE FOUNDATION REPORT ON CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

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<tr>
<th><strong>Your Name:</strong></th>
<th>Will Ibim Beresibo</th>
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<td><strong>Your Organization:</strong></td>
<td>University of Port Harcourt</td>
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<td><strong>Date of report:</strong></td>
<td>16th of October 2019</td>
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<th><strong>Conference Title:</strong></th>
<th>Innovation and Sustainability in Geotechnics for Developing Africa</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location of Conference:</strong></td>
<td>Century City Conference Centre, Cape Town, South Africa</td>
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<td><strong>Dates of Conference:</strong></td>
<td>7th to 9th of October 2019</td>
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**What you learned:**

The conference afforded me the opportunity to learn latest innovations and research works on diverse areas of soils mechanics and geotechnical engineering. I got familiar with recent works particularly on unsaturated soils. In addition, the conference gave me the privilege to interact and network with other Practicing Engineers, Students, Professionals, Consultants, Researchers and Manufactures of geotechnical field and laboratory equipment and softwares developers. The knowledge gained in the conference and from the papers presented shall in no small measure guide me in my PhD research work. I am going to share the information gathered from the conference with other students for the furtherance of scientific research and development in the University of Port Harcourt.

Another learning point was the privilege of attending the meeting of African Member Societies where far reaching decisions were made including granting the Algerian Geotechnical Society the hosting right for the next ARC2023. More importantly, the conference afforded me the rare opportunity of attending the ISSMGE Council meeting where I represented the President of the Nigerian Geotechnical Association who was absent due to other exigencies. In attendance in this meeting were the ISSMGE board members and the Vice Presidents of Member Countries. During the meeting I had the chance to vote and also listen to reports on activities of Chairs of the Board Level Committees. There was also oral presentation by the Australian Geomechanics Society, the host for the 20th ICSMGE, Sydney 2021. It was exciting to learn about the operations of the board and the innovations that are currently ongoing which includes:

- New technical committees – TC 219 (System Performance and Geotechnical Structures), TC 220 (Field Monitoring in Geomechanics) and TC 309 (Machine Learning and Big Data)
- ISSMGE Virtual University with free access to online post graduate course, online library and conference paper review platform.
- Open Edx Platform with homework, examination, credit and degree functionality.

My sincere appreciation to ISSMGE Foundation for the support and grant.
**People you met:**
The conference afforded me the opportunities to meet the president of ISSMGE, board members and many other participants from every parts of the world including but not limited to the following:
- Prof Charles Ng (ISSMGE President)
- Prof Neil Taylor (ISSMGE secretary)
- Prof Etienne Marcelin Kana (ISSMGE VP Africa)
- Anthony Leung (Editor-in-chief ISSMGE Bulletin)
- Prof Dennis Kalumba (COC Chair)
- Prof Buddhima Indraratna (University of Wollongong, Australia)
- Prof Kerry Rowe (Queen’s University)
- Prof Delwyn Fredlund (University of Saskatchewan, Canada)
- Sukumar Pathmanandavel (Aurecon, Australia)
- Associate Prof S.W Jacobsz (University of Pretoria)

**Main features of conference:**
The main features of the conference include:
- Courses on different topics covering unsaturated soils, design of column-supported embankment, sustainability in geotechnical engineering and barriers systems for limiting fluid migration
- Jennings Lectures
- Keynote lectures
- Franki book launch
- CAPG Workshops (Innovation in Engineering Practice)
- Bright Spark lecture
- ISSMGE Board meeting
- ISSMGE council meeting
- African member countries meeting

**Your comments on the conference:**
The 17th African Regional Conference on Soil mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering was well organised and the program of activities met the theme of the conference. The qualities of the keynote lectures, courses and papers at the various sessions were excellent in presented and content. There were series of tea/coffee and lunch breaks in-between the sessions that afforded participant the opportunities to network and visit exhibition stands. All through the conference updates and changes on the conference programme were available on the conference mobile app. The hospitality from Century hotel and conference centre, venue of the conference is also commendable. Both the welcome functions and gala dinner were quite entertaining. Every moment of the conference was impactful and refreshing. In all standard, the conference was a huge success and I congratulate the organisers for job well done.
17th African Regional Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering, ARC2019
Innovation and Sustainability in Geotechnics for Developing Africa
Cape Town, South Africa, 7 – 9 October 2019

Prepared by: Will Ibim Beresibo

The conference was organised by the Geotechnical Division of South African Institution of Civil Engineering (SAICE). Activities for the 17th African Regional Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering started on Saturday 5th of October 2019 with ISSMGE board meeting and welcome function for the 7th African Young Geotechnical Engineers Conference, AYGE. The next day was for the AYGE conference where Young Engineers from Africa and other parts of the world gathered to present papers on different works relating Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering. Also held on this was the ISSMGE council meeting which had in attendance the board members, Vice Presidents of member countries and Chairs of the board level committees.

The opening ceremony of the ARC2019 took place on the 7th of October 2019 with opening performances which was followed by addresses from the Chair of the conference organising committee, SAICE Geotech Division President, Vice president Africa, ISSMGE president and IGS president. There was a book lunch by Franki (A keller Company) titled A guide to practical geotechnical engineering in Africa which was also distributed free to the conference participants. After the opening ceremony, different courses were given by eminent scholars covering Unsaturated Soils Mechanics, Design of Column-Supported Embankments, Sustainability in Geotechnical Engineering and Barrier System for Limiting Fluid Migration. I attended the course on Unsaturated Soil Mechanics and different sub-topics were delivered by renowned professors namely Prof David Toll, Prof Antonin Genes, Prof Charles Ng and Prof Samuel Ampadu. At the end of the courses, the meeting of the African Member Societies was held about 5:30hours.

The early hours of 8th October 2019 were for the Jennings and Keynote lectures delivered by prominent researchers. Paper presentations commenced in the afternoon at parallel sessions (1 & 2) with different themes. One of the social functions put together by the organisers was the conference gala dinner which started at about 19:00hours. This event was spiced with special drinks and food as well as performance from local cultural troupe settling a great atmosphere for the night.

Paper presentation continued on the 9th of October 2019 with parallel session (3 & 4). I presented my paper tilted Settlement of Shallow Foundations in the Niger Delta during the parallel session 4. Another highlight of the day was the Bright Spark lecture delivered by Dr. Charles MacRobert.

The conference came to an end with conference summary and closure discussion.
Photographs from Conference:

During the presentation of my paper

After my paper presentation

With Anthony Leung, Editor-in-chief
ISSMGE Bulletin
At the Gala Dinner

With some young participants from Africa

With Sukumar Pathamanandave (Chair of Corporate Associates Presidential group)
Myself (extreme left) and other participants from African Member Countries

A cross section of African Member Societies and ISSMGE Secretary Prof Taylor