

News

ISSMGE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR IN ACCRA-GHANA

The Ghana Geotechnical Society (GGS) under the patronage of the ISSMGE organized a well-attended international seminar from 2nd-4th February 2009 at the Engineers Centre in Accra. The seminar was attended by 66 participants including three participants from Nigeria. The participants were drawn from private consulting firms, public infrastructure companies, academia and construction firms. Locally, the seminar was under the patronage of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, the Ghana Institution of Engineers and the Ministry of Transportation of Ghana. The theme was “*Ground Improvement for Accelerated Development*” reflecting Ghana’s recent move towards rapid infrastructure development as a strategy for poverty reduction and economic development.



The seminar sought to expose Ghanaian engineers to new trends in ground improvement technologies, to provide opportunity for Consultants, Contractors and developers who have applied new technologies in ground improvement to share their experience and finally to help promote professional geotechnical engineering practice in Ghana.

The resource persons were supplied by both ISSMGE and GGS. ISSMGE provided four resource persons consisting of the President, Prof Pêdro Seco e Pinto of the University of Coimbra in Portugal, the Vice President for Africa, Prof. Mounir Bouassida of the National Engineering School of Tunis and two members of TC17: Prof George Heerten of Germany and Mr. Serge Varaksin, Deputy General Manager of Menard Group, France and Chairman of T.C. 17. These

were complemented by three Ghanaian speakers made up of Prof S. I. K. Ampadu of the Civil Engineering Department of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and President of GGS, Dr M. D. Gidigasua a renowned expert on lateritic soils and Togbui Kporoku III a Director of Conterra Ltd, a private Geotechnical Consulting firm.

The seminar consisted of two days of lectures and one day for a field trip. The lectures covered soil improvement techniques with and without additives, the improvement of soft soils, the principles and use of geosynthetics for soil improvement and the characteristics and improvement of lateritic soils. The third and final day of the seminar was devoted to a field visit to the Keta Sea Defence Project at a fishing town some 150 km east of Accra. During the field trip, Togbui Kporoku III took the participants through the history and content of the project which he said consisted primarily of the building of sea defense structures to stabilize the shores of the fishing town.



Among the three seminar participants from Nigeria was Dr. Samuel Ejezie who is the nominee for the next Vice President for Africa. The programme included a general assembly of GGS during which the ISSMGE President encouraged the Ghana Society to improve upon its membership and programmes and assured the society of the support of ISSMGE. The seminar was particularly significant in that it was the first high profile programme for the Ghana Geotechnical society in recent times and it also clearly showed the potential for the Ghana Society to grow.

Reported by Dr. S.I.K. Ampadu (President), and S.K. AHAMADI (Secretary), Ghana Geotechnical Society.