

## News

# XVII International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering – Alexandria, Egypt 5-9 October 2009 The Academia and Practice in Geotechnical Engineering

The 17th International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering was held in the lovely city of Alexandria on the beautiful Mediterranean Sea coast from 5 through 9 October 2009. Alexandria, which was built for Alexander the Great in 332-331 BC, is a culturally diverse city of ancient and modern attractions with a European influence. The city extends about 32 km along the north central coast of Egypt and is 220 km from Cairo. Around 80 percent of all of Egypt's imports and exports pass through the Alexandria port.

The 17th ICSMGE was held at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Constructed with the largest diaphragm wall circle in the world, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is a revival of the ancient Great Library of Alexandria (built in 288 BC and operating until 412 AD), which established the city as the greatest scientific and intellectual center in the world at the time.



Council Meeting at 17th ICSMGE

### ICSMGE OPENING CEREMONY

The 17th ICSMGE was opened with an address from Prof. Mamdouh Hamza, the chairman of the conference. Prof. Pedro Sêco e Pinto, president of the ISSMGE, then welcomed the delegates on behalf of the International Society of Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering, and Eng. Ahmed El Magraby, Egypt's Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Development, extended an official welcome to Egypt to the conference participants. Mr. Adel Labib, the Governor of Alexandria, and a representative of Egypt's Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources added their enthusiastic support to the conference and also extended their good wishes to the delegates in Alexandria.



Prof. Briaud and Prof. Sêco e Pinto

### PARTICIPATION

The conference attracted 1341 geotechnical and ground engineering academics and practitioners from 86 countries, with the largest number of participants (108) hailing from Japan. Africa was also well represented with 144 participants from 16 countries across the continent. Eighty-one participants from Egypt, the host country, joined their international colleagues in Alexandria.

<b>17th ICSMGE Attendance</b>	
Number of Countries	86
Largest Participation from Japan	108
Participation from AFRICA (16 countries)	144
Participation from Host country	81
No. of participants	983
No. of Students	75
Exhibitor Personal	82
Accompanying persons	201
Total Number of Participants	1341

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#### Country Breakdown of 17th ICSMGE Delegates

	Country	Participants		Country	Participants		Country	Participants
1	Albania	7	29	Ghana	1	57	Pakistan	2
2	Algeria	4	30	Greece	21	58	Panama	1
3	Argentina	7	31	Hong Kong	12	59	Peru	1
4	Australia	35	32	Hungary	4	60	Poland	12
5	Austria	6	33	India	16	61	Portugal	16
6	Bangladesh	2	34	Indonesia	3	62	Qatar	1
7	Belgium	11	35	Iran	15	63	Romania	8
8	Brazil	33	36	Iraq	3	64	Russian Federation	28
9	Bulgaria	3	37	Ireland	3	65	Senegal	2
10	Cameroon	4	38	Italy	34	66	Serbia	1
11	Canada	25	39	Japan	108	67	Singapore	5
12	Chile	6	40	Jordan	4	68	Slovakia (Slovak Repu	2
13	China	67	41	Kazakhstan	4	69	Slovenia	6
14	Colombia	5	42	Korea, Republic Of	32	70	South Africa	9
15	Congo	2	43	Latvia	1	71	Spain	17
16	Costa Rica	7	44	Lebanon	5	72	Sri Lanka	1
17	Croatia	10	45	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	9	73	Sudan	4
18	Czech Republic	7	46	Lithuania	1	74	Sweden	6
19	Denmark	4	47	Macedonia	3	75	Switzerland	8
20	Dominican Republic	1	48	Malaysia	11	76	Taiwan	13
21	Ecuador	1	49	Mexico	16	77	Thailand	7
22	Egypt	81	50	Morocco	3	78	Tunisia	6
23	Estonia	3	51	Mozambique	2	79	Turkey	10
24	Ethiopia	2	52	Netherlands	27	80	Ukraine	7
25	Finland	10	53	New Zealand	10	81	United Arab Emirates	10
26	France	46	54	Nigeria	13	82	United Kingdom	17
27	Georgia	1	55	Norway	11	83	United States	57
28	Germany	35	56	Oman	1	84	Venezuela	1
						85	Chad	1
						86	Ivory Cost	1

#### SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

The conference organizing committee received 803 abstracts from authors wishing to present their ideas and experiences at the conference. Of these, 688 papers representing 69 member societies were selected for presentation.

Five excellent State-of-the-Art Lectures were presented during the first two days of the conference. On the opening day, Prof. Paul Mayne gave a lecture on the topic Material Behaviour and Testing and Dr. Brian Simpson presented a lecture covering Analysis and Design. Dr. Arsenio Negro opened Day Two of the conference with his lecture on Prediction, Monitoring and Performance. Professors Chu Jian and Mark Jakska then followed with their lectures addressing the topics of Construction Processes and Management, Training and Education, respectively. A spectacular Heritage Lecture was also delivered on Day Two by Dr. Zahi Hawass, Director of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities.

Delegates also enjoyed two distinguished Great Project lectures presented on Day Two: Prof. Michele Jamiolkowski discussed the site characterization and geotechnical problems faced in safeguarding Venice from high tides and Mr. Wolfgang Brunner described the development of foundation construction techniques during the past 5,000 years. The Practitioners/Academia Forum, led by Prof. William Van Impe and Prof. Mamdouh Hamza on the opening day, enabled participants to explore and debate the collaborative efforts required to achieve geotechnical and construction successes.

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#### **17th ICSMGE Program Statistics:**

No. of State of the Art Lectures	5
No. of contributors to SOA Lectures	18
Heritage Lecture	1
Great Project Lectures	2
Academic-Practitioner Forum	1
No. of Technical Sessions	15
No. of General Reporters	16
No. of Panelists	45
No. of Short Presentations	180
Total No. of Speakers	260

#### **SATELLITE CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS**

Sixteen Satellite Conferences and Workshops were held before or during the conference. The list below shows the Technical Committees, Joint Technical Committees, and Regional Technical Committees that organized the events.

- TC 4 Earthquake Geotechnical Engineering
- JTC2 Representation of Geo-Engineering Data in Electronic
- TC 8 Frost Geotechnics
- TC 19 Joint Preservation of Historic Sites
- JTC 6 Ancient Monuments/Historical Sites
- TC 23 Limit State Design in Geotechnical Engineering
- TC 38 Soil Structure Interaction
- TC 34 Prediction & Simulation Methods in Geomechanics
- TC 2 Physical Modeling in Geotechnics
- TC 5 Environmental Geotechnics
- ATC 17 Solid Waste Management in Geo-environmental Engineering
- TC 6 Unsaturated Soils
- TC 17 Ground Improvement
- TC 28 Underground Construction in Soft Ground
- TC 29 Laboratory Stress Strain Strength Testing of Geomaterials
- JC 7 Joint Technical Committee on Soft Rocks & Endurated Soils
- JTC 3 Education & Training

#### **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL YOUNG GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERS CONFERENCE (4iYGEC)**

The 4iYGEC began in Alexandria at the El Mahrousa Hotel two days before the main conference. The 4iYGEC participants then attended the State-of-the-Art and Special Lectures on the first two days of the ICSMGE. On 6 October, Prof. Fatma Baligh, the chairperson for the 4iYGEC, along with three selected 4iYGEC participants presented a briefing on the events of the young engineers' conference to the 17th ICSMGE participants.

#### **SOCIAL EVENTS**

Following the first day of the ICSMGE program, a Welcome Reception was held for all conference participants and their accompanying persons at the Qaitbay Citadel. The conference's Gala Dinner was held the next night in the Tea Garden of Salamlek Palace in Montazah, once the summer residence of King Farouk, Egypt's former ruler. The gala dinner was attended by around 700 people.

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An Egyptian Cultural Evening was held at Antoniadis Gardens in central Alexandria on the evening of 8 October, where attendees, who included most conference participants and their accompanying persons, were able to experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of Egypt.

#### **PROGRAM FOR ACCOMPANYING PERSONS**

Persons accompanying conference registrants to Alexandria were able to participate in various organized tours in and around Alexandria, as well as attend the evening social events. The tours were quite popular, as represented by the number of participants:

Alexandria National Museum and Qaitbay Citadel	65
Roman Amphitheatre, Catacombs, and Pompey's Pillar	52
Bibliotheca Alexandrina	44
Underwater City of Cleopatra	3
Excursion to Rosetta (Rashid)	34
Excursion to Al Alamein	23
Over-day visit to Cairo	38

#### **TECHNICAL VISITS**

Five visits to geotechnically interesting sites were organized for interested conference participants on 9 October. The following table shows the number of people who participated in the visits:

Alexandria Port	242
East Port Said Port	21
Cairo Metro	26
Giza Pyramids Archeology	297
Aswan Dams	8

#### **TECHNICAL EXHIBITION**

Forty-three companies participated in the technical exhibition held in parallel to the 17th ICSMGE. The companies included developers and manufacturers of software, instruments and equipment, geosynthetics, geotextiles, contractors, consultants, and technical book publishers.

Software	8
Instrumentation and Geotechnical Testing Equipments	18
Contractors	7
Geosynthetics and Geotextiles	4
Consultants	4
Publishers	2
Total	43

The conference in Alexandria brought together academics and practitioners from around the globe who share an interest in geotechnical engineering and working together to develop innovative ideas that will contribute to the future successes in our profession and the built environment in which we all live.

Reported by Dr. Marawan Shahien