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Sent: Monday, 9 August 2010 4:08 a.m.

To:

Subject: ISSMGE President 300 Day Progress Report-8August2010

Distinguished Colleagues, Dear Friends,

This is my tenth progress report after 300 days as your President. Note that previous reports are on the ISSMGE web site under "From the President" if you need them. In this report, I would like to talk to you about the name ISSMGE, awards, the results of the ISSMGE Board meeting in Moscow, and the FIFA World Cup.

ISSMGE or ISGE. Last month I asked you two questions. Should we be called Geo-Engineers? And Should we drop the Soil Mechanics part of our society name? I received a total of 39 responses from 16 countries: some were emails "reply to all", some were emails sent to me only, I also had 7 phone calls where the matter was discussed. While most responses were not official, the results may be of interest to you.

- Geo-engineering: 21 No, 14 Yes, 4 neutral.
- Int. Soc. of Geotechnical Engineering: 21 Yes, 11 No, 7 neutral

So, while the discussion remains open, it seems that the idea of Geo-Engineering encountered strong opposition while the idea of ISGE encountered strong support. I suggest that we concentrate on the idea of ISGE. I would like to hear from more members and more countries on the idea of going from ISSMGE to ISGE. My view is that

1. Some 80% of our member societies do not have Soil Mechanics in their own names
2. If asked what they were, most of our members would likely answer: geotechnical engineer
- 3.

The title of our conferences rarely include the words soil mechanics. For example we do not say conference on soil mechanics and deep foundations or conference on soil mechanics and slope stability.

4. A change in name, although cosmetic only, sends a message of dynamism in our field
5. The name of our society is unduly long
- 6.

Soil Mechanics is part of Geotechnical Engineering, it is the foundation of our field along with Soil Chemistry, Soil Thermodynamic, and others. It is not separate. Adding it is redundant, inefficient, and cumbersome.

That is my view. What is your view?

Awards. ISSMGE has 3 awards: the Terzaghi Oration, the Kevin Nash medal, and the Young Geotechnical Engineer award. We have many members, national societies, technical committees who go beyond the call of duty for ISSMGE and they deserve to be recognized. Some possible awards are: outstanding member society, outstanding individual member, outstanding technical committee, outstanding innovator in geotechnical engineering, and outstanding geotechnical engineering project. Obviously we do not want to create a long list of awards or they lose their prestige but I think that 3 awards every 4 years for 19,000 members and 86 countries is not consistent with the level of recognition we owe to our volunteer members. ISSMGE awards should be very highly regarded and coveted because they would represent recognition by our peers at the level of the planet. Should we have more judiciously chosen ISSMGE awards? What do you think?

Some feedback on the Board meeting in Moscow. Many thanks to our Russian colleagues for being such great host of the Board members in Moscow in early June. Some of the decisions taken include

1. VP Asia. The accident sustained by our colleague and friend Zuyu Chen was very unfortunate. After consultation with Zuyu Chen and with the Asian National Societies, the Board approved the selection of Askar Zhussupbekov as the new VP Asia and Charles Ng as the new Appointed Board Member.

2. Secretariat. The Board thanked Neil Taylor for his excellent services over the last 12 years. A new search took place as announced through several email from the president to the member societies in the spring 2010. Only one proposal was received and it came from the BGA which proposed Neil Taylor as ISSMGE Secretary. The Board decided to give the Secretariat of ISSMGE to BGA and Neil Taylor for the next 8 years.

3. Conferences. The Board decided that, after the Int. Conf. on Environmental Geotechnics (ICEG) in New Delhi in Nov 2010, future ICEGs would be a TC conference thereby giving the decision of the location, format, proceedings of the conference to the sole control of the TC on Environmental Geotechnics and reducing the contribution to

ISSMGE for that conference from 5% to 2% of registration.

Many other topics were discussed and the Board heard reports on the State of the Russian National Society, on the progress of the three Board level committees, the ISSMGE Foundation, and the Student and Young Members Presidential Group.

FIFA World Cup. Last month, I found myself in a very enviable position while watching the FIFA World Cup. Being a “citizen” of 86 countries, I could not lose. Janet asked me who are you for? I would answer: for everyone. So congratulations to all the countries who participated, to South Africa for running a spectacular world cup, and a special one for our colleagues in Spain who seem to collect a lot of trophies these days with the World Cup, the Tour de France, and the Wimbledon Championships.

Best wishes,

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