

*Prof. Seokwon Jeon
President*

ISRM Newsletter No 66 – June 2024 Message from the President

Dear ISRM colleagues,

I hope this message finds you well. Over the past few months, our society has been actively engaged in various activities, which I am pleased to share with you.

From February 29 to March 2, with the cooperation of the Costa Rican Geotechnical Association, we held Board meetings on the first and third days, and a workshop on the second day in San Jose, Costa Rica. The workshop featured eleven presentations from our Board members and three presentations from local experts. In particular, there discussions on topics of interest to the Costa Rican society, such as weak rock and rock engineering for hydroelectric projects.

In the Board meeting, we discussed over 20 agenda items, the most important of which was establishing plans for the next four years. Our society has operated three committees so far, but the Board decided to add one more this term. The four committees are the Education Fund Committee, Young Members' Committee, Technical Oversight Committee, and Communication Committee. Additionally, regarding our society's most important body, the Commissions, we received 24 applications by February 14, and based on the TOC recommendations, the Board approved 22 Commissions. In addition to the Commissions that were active in the previous Board, newly approved Commissions are on AI in Rock Mechanics and Rock Engineering, Beyond Limits - Rocks in the Face of Extreme Conditions, Bio-Rock Mechanics, Earthquake Motions in Rock Engineering, Mechanics of Ancient Rock Structures, Risks and Reliability in Rock Slope Engineering, Rock Weathering and Erosion, Estimation of Rock Mass Strength and Deformability, and Ultradeep Rock Mass Mechanics and Engineering. We look forward to the diverse activities of all the committees and commissions for the coming years.

On May 1, in conjunction with GeoAmericas 2024 held in Toronto, Canada, under the auspices of the IGS, the FedIGS Board meeting was held. Reports on the activities of the four JTCs were presented. Although there were not many activities recently due to the new appointment of the JTC members, discussions were made to promote information exchange through the webpage. Additionally, there were discussions on plans to continue the FedIGS Lecture and principles for organizing a joint symposium, Geo-Engineering Symposium. I would like to thank Prof. Hehua Zhu, the Chair of JTC2 for Representation of Geo-Engineering Data, for his active involvement.

In 2024, the ISRM sponsors several events: the 14th International Symposium on Landslide in Chambéry, France, in July (a JTC1 Conference), Eurock 2024 in Alicante, Spain, in July, the 5th International Conference on Information Technology in Geo-Engineering in Golden, USA, in August (a JTC2 Conference), and CouFrac 2024 in Kyoto, Japan, in November.

The 2024 ISRM International Symposium, the 13th Asian Rock Mechanics Symposium (ARMS13) will be held in New Delhi, India, from September 22-27. The organizing committee, chaired by Prof. Mahendra Singh, is preparing the event with dedication, and we ask for your interest and

*Prof. Seokwon Jeon
President*

participation. There will be four keynote lectures by Dr Nick Barton, Prof. Ömer Aydan, Prof. Ki-Bok Min, and Prof. Krishna Panthi. Presentations will also be given by the 2024 Rocha Medal Winner, Dr. Kazuki Sawayama, and the 2024 Franklin Lecture recipient, Dr Vikram Vishal. At this event, the ISRM John Hudson Rock Engineering Award, the Science Achievement Award and the Young Rock Engineer Award will be presented. The Selection Committees are currently reviewing the candidates, and while it is difficult to distinguish among them, I extend my congratulations to the final awardees in advance. The ISRM Best Paper Award will be also presented. The awardees will be selected based on the evaluation of submitted papers and presentations, and the award will be presented at the closing ceremony. As in previous years, the 9th Early Career Forum will be held at this event. Eight young scholars recommended from the Asian region will attend, supported by the ISRM Education Fund, to present their research. Congratulations to those selected, and I hope for fruitful academic and technical exchanges at the forum.

A total of 22 outstanding doctoral dissertations are currently under screening process to select the winner and runner-up(s) of the Rocha Medal 2025, our prestigious award for the best doctoral dissertation. The winner is scheduled to be decided at the Board meeting to be held in India.

Our Society is publishing a Book Series. So far, eight books have been published, and the manuscript for the ninth book, "Geomechanical Aspects of Abandoned Room and Pillar Mines and Remediation Measures," written by Prof. Ömer Aydan, has recently been submitted to the publisher. I am grateful to Prof. Aydan for his dedicated work and look forward to the publication soon.

Online lectures were delivered by Prof. Manchao He in December last year, Dr. Jonny Rutqvist in March, and Prof. Carlos Carranza-Torres in June. I appreciate their commitment and excellent lectures. Lectures by Prof. Ranjith Pathegama and Dr. Sylvie Gentier are planned for September and December this year, respectively. I extend my gratitude to both speakers for accepting our invitation and look forward to their outstanding presentations.

This year, Morocco has joined ISRM as a new National Group, which is represented by the Moroccan Committee of Soil Mechanics and Geotechnics (CMMSG). I welcome our new National Group and look forward to their active participation. Additionally, we have good news that Iran, an important former National Group of our Society, is planning to rejoin.

I sincerely hope to see you at ARMS13 in India this September or at other events sponsored by our society.

I wish you all good health and success.



Seokwon Jeon