

President's 2020 New Year Address

Dear ISRM friends and colleagues,

We are approaching the end of 2019. As the new President of ISRM, I would like to share with you some of the news since 18 September 2019 when I took over the mission from Dr. Eda Freitas de Quadros of Brazil during the 14th ISRM International Congress in Foz do Iguassu, Brazil. The new term started on that occasion with new Board Members with a main target of doing best for the continuation of the success and modernization of our Society.



First of all, we would like to sincerely thank to our former respective Presidents and their Boards and invaluable support of the ISRM Secretariat, who performed impressive works for the modernization of ISRM and left a strong and developing ISRM with an increasing number of members more than 8000 to the new Board, and the ISRM National Groups and their members for their involvement and contributions.

The first meeting of the new Board was held in Foz do Iguassu on 18 September 2019 in the last day of 14th ISRM Congress. In this meeting, Dr. Suseno Kramadibrata (ISRM VP for Asia) was elected as First Vice President and the members of the following Board Committees were appointed:

- Technical Oversight Committee (TOC): Laura Pyrak-Nolte (Chair), Leandro Alejano and Ömer Aydan.
- ISRM Education Fund Committee (EFC): Yang Qiang (Chair), José Pavon, Manchao He, Seokwon Jeon, and Luís Lamas.
- Young Members Committee (YMC): Sevda Dehkoda (Chair), Vojkan Jovicic and Michael du Plessis.

After the 14th ISRM Congress, until the end of this year the following ISRM specialized conferences were successfully organized:

- The International Symposium on Rock Mechanics and Engineering for Sustainable Energy VCRES 2019 was held between 22-24 November 2019 in Hanoi, Vietnam. It was jointly organized by the Vietnamese Society for Rock Mechanics (VSRM), the Vietnamese National group of ISRM, and ISRM. The symposium was co-supported by the Chinese Society for Rock Mechanics and Engineering (CSRME), the Education Fund Committee of ISRM, and the Institute of Geological Sciences of Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology. The 1st Vietnam – China Researchers and Engineers symposium on Rock mechanics and engineering was taken place at VCRES 2019 as the special plenary session.
- The 5th ISRM Young Scholar's Symposium on Rock Mechanics (YSRM2019) and International Symposium on Rock Engineering: ISRM Regional Symposium for Innovative Future (REIF2019) were held between 1-4 December 2019 in Okinawa, Japan. It was organized by Japanese Society for Rock Mechanics and ISRM.

I was not able to attend both symposia. However, two Vice Presidents at Large, Yang Qiang and Ömer Aydan, represented me in Hanoi and Okinawa, respectively, and reported that both events were very successful. I thank to organizers of both events for their kind efforts and the participants for their contributions.

As a national conference, I attended China Rock 2019, the 16th CSRME Annual Conference, held in Beijing, China, between 18-21 November 2019. The theme of this conference was "Rock Mechanics in High Altitude Region". I congratulate all colleagues giving efforts for this huge organization and 3000 colleagues for their participation and contribution.

During about 3.5 months of the new Board tenure the main activities and works done are as follow:

- The application from Mongolia was evaluated and the new ISRM Board members approved the Mongolian Society for Rock Mechanics and Engineering (MNSRM) as the newest ISRM National Group of Mongolia in October 2019. Our Society has expanded now to 61 national groups, with the inclusion of Mongolia. We will pay prime attention to increase the number of National Groups and members and are expecting that our society will more expand in the coming years.
- On 5 and 6 November 2019, I visited the Secretariat of ISRM, at LNEC in Lisbon to study with our Secretary General and VP for Europe for planning the near future
- Prof. Frederic Pellet (France) and Prof. Gen-hua Shi (China), who kindly accepted the invitation of the new Board, will give the first two On-line Lectures of the next year in March and June, respectively. We will continue to encourage these lectures and to invite rock mechanics and rock engineering experts.
- In this year, 11 of the current 17 ISRM Commissions submitted applications to continue their activities and 3 applications were submitted to start new Commissions for the period 2019-2023. The new TOC evaluated all applications and sent a report including detailed and constructive suggestions to all Board members. After the approval of the TOC report by the Board, the comments have been sent to each Commission President. The Commission Presidents considered that the suggestions by TOC were good for their future works and sent improved applications based on the TOC report. These Commissions will officially be approved very soon. The new Board will continue to give more encouragement to them and pay attention for the establishment of new Commissions based on new initiatives.
- The new Education Fund Committee has started its work and accepted the “Application to hold the 5th Early Career Forum during the 2020 ISRM International Symposium - Eurock 2020” and submitted the document to the Board for its approval. In addition, a plan of action of this Committee for 2020 is under preparation by the Chairman of EFC and the Board members will send proposals for the EFC members with connections to industry.
- The ISRM Secretary General sent the reports from previous years to the members of the new YMC for planning the works of this Committee.
- In order to start its activities as early as possible, before the regular meeting in Trondheim, Norway in June 2020, the new Board decided to have 2nd meeting on 1 and 2 February 2020 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. In addition, in order to motivate the National Groups from Eastern Europe and to enhance their participation, we and Slovenian Geotechnical Society are organizing an ISRM Workshop with a topic of “Recent Trends in Rock Mechanics” on 31 January 2020 in Ljubljana. We expect to have around 20 lecturers for the event, 11 by the Board members and 9 by the national societies in the region.
- In November 2019, the delegation of ISRM, consisting of myself, VP at Large Vojkan Jovičić and Former VP at Large Ivan Vrkljan participated to the national Conference organized by Serbian Geotechnical Society at Vrnjačka Banja as invited speakers. Prior to this event we attended a meeting with the President of Serbian Society for Rock with an aim to aid the activities of the society.
- Concerning interaction with Sister Societies, we have been participating in the activities of the Board of the Federation of International Geo-Engineering Societies (FedIGS) and exchanging communication with them. The 3rd International Conference on Information Technology in Geo-Engineering (3rd ICITG) was organized under the activities of the Joint Technical Committee (JTC-2) of the FedIGS between 30 September and 3 October 2019 in Portugal. Our Immediate Past President Eda Freitas de Quadros represented me in this Conference and prepared a report. I thank to Dr. Quadros and organizers of this very successful event.

- The announcement of the ISRM Science and Technology Award and the John Hudson Rock Engineering Award, which will be given first time by ISRM in 2020, has been sent to all National Groups for submission of nominations.
- In 2008, the ISRM launched a survey to ISRM members to improve the knowledge about who they are, how they assess the ISRM, what they would like the ISRM to do. The questions and results of this survey will be revisited during the next Board meeting and think of the opportunity to launch a new survey to our membership.

In the coming year, we will have several ISRM symposia, such as the “2020 ISRM International Symposium EUROCK 2020 - Hard Rock Excavation and Support” (Trondheim, Norway) with ISRM Board, Council and Commission meetings, “SBMR2020 - 9th Brazilian Rock Mechanics Symposium - an ISRM Specialized Conference” (Campinas, Brazil) and “ARMS11 - 11th Asian Rock Mechanics Symposium, Challenges and Opportunities in Rock Mechanics” - an ISRM Regional Symposium (Beijing, China). We are waiting for your participation to these activities for sharing our knowledge and progress of rock mechanics and rock engineering and exchange our ideas for our future.

Unfortunately, every year we have very relevant people dying. Prof. John A. Hudson (February 2019) and Prof. Giovanni Barla (November 2019) became the two most recent great losses for our Society. We will never forget their great contributions to Rock Mechanics and Rock Engineering and ISRM and their kindness, and keep their memories alive for the next generations.

We always need your contribution and involvement in ISRM activities. We would very much appreciate your time and effort in this regard.

I wish you all a HEALTHY, HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL 2020!

Reşat Ulusay

ISRM President, 2019-2023

