

Report of the ISRM President Eda F. de Quadros

Presentation made to the Council meeting on 15th September 2019, in the city of Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil

Good afternoon, dear ladies and gentlemen participating in this 2019 ISRM Council meeting.

Welcome to all of you!

Thanks for your presence here and for your efforts in bringing proxies to participate in this meeting.

Our four years term of office is almost at the end!

Our Board is leaving, and another Board will soon replace us, with the objective of keeping our Society running for another period of 4 years, with some new paths to be delineated and new ideas to be developed.

This periodic renewal of the Board members every four years contributes to a great extent to bring to our Society fresh ideas that will join with the development achieved before, in a process that has gone on and on since 1962, the year when our Society was founded by Prof. Leopold Müller, our first President.

In this last Report I would like to make a brief retrospective of some of our achievements during these four years. The main objective of our work has been to promote the world-wide awareness of rock mechanics and rock engineering, through dissemination of the latest developments and understanding of the principles that govern the scientific knowledge of rock mechanics and its applications.

We made our best efforts to expand ISRM in countries and regions where the penetration of our Society did not exist or was greatly reduced within our various geographical regions. Events made in these regions with the participation of Board members, had great reward for ISRM.

We succeeded in bringing 3 countries to join us as new members of ISRM. We organized more than 20 Specialized Conferences, 10 Regional Symposia and 3 International Symposia on 3 different continents. All that with the close cooperation with our National Groups.

Our 14th International Congress is being held for the first time in Latin America in the border of Argentina-Brazil-Paraguay. Added to the events, we provided for our members the quarterly Newsletter during these four years, four editions of the News Journal and 17 Online Lectures given by prominent professionals from our community with the objective to disseminate and increase technical information among our members.

We all realize that after some nearly 60 years of activity and continued work of ISRM, there are still many unanswered questions in the field of rock mechanics and rock engineering. Fundamentals still need to be clarified to help in the understanding of the behavior of rocks and rock masses. One of the major challenges is the varied geology, and its submission to external and internal loading provided by an excavation.

Another big challenge is related to the phenomena involved with water and its control in our rock engineering structures. In this aspect, design and modelling can advance only with the knowledge of the

directional characteristics of the flow in rock masses by means of the development of appropriate hydraulic field tests and observation. To overcome these challenges, collaboration with geologists and multidisciplinary teams is necessary.

The fundamental question posed by Leopold Muller, about the shear strength of rock masses to justify our Society's foundation, for instance, is still an open question, with diverse opinions and methods used.

The work of ISRM in the dissemination of technical information and principles worldwide, through the publication of the products of our 17 technical commissions, and the lectures given to fulfill the requirements of some of our Awards such as the Müller Lecture, the Rocha Medal and the Franklin Lecture, have collectively made a big contribution to updating our methods and techniques.

With the approval of the Council we could increase the amount given to the winner of the Rocha Medal, in order to make it more attractive for the young generation. We were also pleased with the approval by the Council for the addition of the term "rock engineering" to the name of our Society, which contributes to define a concern not only with the scientific development of rock mechanics but also with the practice of rock engineering. The Council also approved an extensive revision of our Statutes with many updates that were needed in order to adapt our rules to modern times.

The present Board worked with three Committees. The success of these Board Committees was due to the efforts of three of our Vice Presidents that voluntarily chaired these Board Committees and to their members. The activities of these Committees are briefly described as follows:

- The Technical Oversight Committee, which analyses the work of the technical ISRM Commissions and gives information to the Board about our 17 Commissions;
- the Young Members Committee, which looks after and encourages the participation of young members to ISRM – this Committee organized successfully the Rock Bowl in many of our events during these four years;
- the Education Fund Committee – organizes the Early Career Forum, a proposal developed by the present Board. Three Early Career Forum were already organized in different continents and the fourth one is being held together with this Congress. Funds for the Early Career Forum have been provided by ISRM and by the Chinese National Group.

The current Board could contribute also to the growth of our Society in these last four years. We started in 2015 with 7,777 members and have now 8,482 ordinary members showing a growth of 9% in our membership. We had also a growth in the number of corporate members which are now 165.

We want to recognize the importance for our Society of the work of the Past Presidents and their respective Boards, and the great contribution given by the National Groups for the enhancing of our Society, as well as the work of the Secretaries General in Lisbon, particularly the contribution of the present Secretary General, Dr Luís Lamas. Our special thanks also to Sofia Meess, the ISRM Executive Secretary for her kindness to attend the members of our Society.

One very special thanks for the Organizing Commission of the ISRM 14th International Congress! To all members and the three Chairmen of the Commission, but especially to Prof. Sérgio Fontoura for organizing our Congress and the ISRM Special Sessions: the Early Career Forum and the John Hudson Memorial Session.

As the 14th ISRM President I want to express my deep gratitude for the strong collaboration I received from the Vice Presidents of the present Board, because it is due to their dedication and commitment that we could develop our work.

I would like to express my appreciation to the work developed by our National Groups, here represented by the members of this Council. The National Groups and their members are the essence of our Society and nothing can be done without their strong commitment. Fortunately, this Board could count with the support of the Council for all matters.

Finally, and personally, I would like to thank the support I received from my husband, Dr Nick Barton, an ISRM Fellow member, during these four years of my Presidential term.



BOARD MEETING, 12-13 SEPTEMBER 2019

Thank you!