



Emeritus professor of Engineering Geology, National Technical University of Athens (NTUA); past president of the Geological Society of Greece; independent consultant engineer; Mining Engineering degree from the School of Mines of NTUA (1966); postgraduate degree in Applied Geology and Doctorate, University of Grenoble, France (1969); visiting Professor University of Grenoble (1987) and Paris School of Mines (2003).

Hans Cloos medal of IAEG, André Dumont medal of the Geological Society of Belgium, Glosop medal of the Geological Society of London, Richard Jahns award in USA. Presentation of named lectures around the world. Chevalier "Palmes académiques" of the French Republic. *Dr honoris causa* of the University of Thrace. Author of over 300 papers in journals or major conference proceedings. Editor in chief of "Geotechnical and Geological Engineering". Consultant or expert on major civil engineering works in many places around the world, on mainly dams and underground works, landslides and water resources projects.

In 1972, I had already returned from France having finished my doctoral studies and was doing my military service as a sub-lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. I was in a training camp practicing the construction of bridges and preparing mine fields... during the evenings in my tent I had a few books and among them was an issue of a new journal entitled the "Bulletin of engineering geology". This was my first acquaintance with the IAEG. 22 years later I had the honour to become the president of the Association.

My first direct contact with the Association was at the 3rd congress in Madrid (Spain) in 1978. I was impressed by the outgoing president Marcel Arnould; the way he managed and conducted the meetings. It was in Madrid that I joined the commission on "Site investigations" chaired by David Price and Niek Rengers, two exceptional engineering geologists and persons. From 1984, I participated in all the international and official meetings of the IAEG. I also organised one in Greece in 1988 on a very particular topic: the protection of monuments and historical sites.

From 1990 to 1994, I was the vice president

for Europe. In 1992, at the International Geological Congress of Kyoto, during the official dinner, seated the Japanese way almost on the floor, Asher Shadmon, the first president, Michael Langer and Owen White, two past presidents, expressed their intention to propose me as the next president. In Lisbon in 1994, during the IAEG congress, I was elected as the head of the Association for the following four years. It was a great privilege and honour, but it also came with serious responsibilities. I followed the highly successful presidency of Ricardo Oliveira and was responsible for a learned society in an expanding orbit. Looking back, I am satisfied that 1994 to 1998 were stimulating and productive years; years of many achievements for the IAEG.

The modification of the name of the Association was agreed in 1997. It was already clear from previous years that a change was necessary. Since then, the IAEG's full name has been the "International Association for Engineering Geology and the Environment", which more accurately reflects our involvement in environmental protection and the proper appreciation given



Paul Marinos and the executive committee at its meeting during the international symposium on engineering geology and the environment in Athens (Greece) in 1997, preparing the proposition to the council for the change to the name of the Association and the new era for the bulletin

by engineering geologists to environmental issues. However, we considered it very important to retain the emphasis on engineering and to maintain the original objectives of the Association as a learned society in the geotechnical domain, in engineering design, construction and in development.

A new period for the IAEG journal, the *Bulletin of Engineering Geology and the Environment* was started. From 1998, the journal appeared quarterly, instead of biannually, and was published by a prominent publisher. It was not an easy decision to move away from a biannual journal with a good tradition but without a robust peer review. I recall the long discussions we had with the publisher in Berlin to ensure we achieved a high standard journal and maintained the benefits for our members, while also increasing the visibility of the bulletin among non-members, universities, research centres, institutions and the industry. The bulletin remains part of the subscription fees to the Association, and is thus an inexpensive journal for our members. The very efficient

work of the editor-in-chief, Brian Hawkins, with the assistance of Marian Trott and the co-editor Roger Cojean, led the bulletin to where it stands today - among the respected journals in the field of geosciences and geoenvironment, possessing an impact factor and with global appreciation. I am personally very proud of this achievement.

Economic constraints affected a number of countries in the ninety's. Despite this, I made a great effort to keep the overall membership of the Association intact and even increase the numbers of members slightly. The executive gave assistance and strengthened relations in many countries worldwide. Ten national groups were accepted and welcomed by the council during the four years of my term: Georgia, Estonia, Iran, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal and Singapore. We were also pleased to welcome back to activity Indonesia and Yugoslavia. Yearly discussions, and my frequent visits to the USA, resulted in the Association of Engineering Geologists (AEG) of that country becoming the IAEG national group. The AEG

officials, John Peck, the President when we signed the agreement, and I were confident that this collaboration would provide many rewards for both organisations and their members. Such benefits can be seen today, although there remain many desired goals still to be achieved.

For many years we had a special relationship with our sister societies in the International Society for Rock Mechanics (ISRM) and the International Society for Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering (ISSMGE). This collaboration was part of the evolutionary development of engineering geology. A very special conference on this interplay was organised in Copenhagen by the ISSMGE in the first year of my term as president. We actively participated in and co-sponsored this event; the best way to improve relations and break down traditional barriers. I had the opportunity to meet many times with my colleagues in the sister societies, the ISRM president Shun Sakurai and the ISSMGE president Mikele Jamiolkowski. This collaboration, underpinned by mutual respect, was not only effective but also

most enjoyable. We faced all matters of common interests with an open mind and the collaboration led to co-sponsorship of events and broader mutual communications. The climax of this relationship was the memorable conference "Geoen 2000" in Melbourne in 2000 where so many key and lasting contributions from all three societies were presented and published. I also pushed the liaison with the International Tunnelling Association and the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH). With the latter I had very fruitful and pleasant meetings with the presidents John Moore and Michael Knight. I am grateful for the honorary membership offered to me by that association.

During my term I travelled a lot. I made two around-the-world trips and I recollect missing a meeting in Singapore, coming from Hawaii, because I did not realise that the date of the meeting did not exist in my schedule. Like Jules Verne's Phileas Fogg but in the opposite direction; I was travelling westbound and crossed the International Date Line, thus losing a day. I visited a large number of national groups and I tried to identify key persons and encourage them to act in countries where no IAEG activities were present. Besides promoting IAEG matters, I always recall how enjoyable these visits were, involving many colleagues, significant persons and great hospitality. I have a long lasting connection with so many of them, far beyond exchanging seasonal greetings every year.

Whilst I was president I had the privilege of presenting the Hans Cloos Medal to Owen White and to Ricardo Oliveira; two eminent scientists who, each in their own way, contributed to the application of our science to the technological field and to the growth of the Association.

During the years of my presidency I greatly enjoyed working with so many people. In particular, key persons in the national groups and commissions and my colleagues in the executive: the vice presidents Cobus Venter (Africa), John Gartner (N America), Jose Sevilla (S America), Sijing Wang (Asia), Warwick Prebble (Australasia), Edmund Krauter (Europe) and Brian Hawkins (Europe). We had many meetings and a lot of long telephone calls (no video-conferences were available at that time) and I much appreciate the generous help, enthusiasm and contribution they provided to my term in office. I would like to make a special reference to Marcel Arnould and Michael Langer, our past presidents, for sharing their experience with me. I wish to particularly mention Ricardo Oliveira the immediate past president and a great friend, Louis Primel, a so-devoted secretary general, and Michel Deveughèle, the efficient treasurer, who each offered outstanding services during my



► Ricardo Oliveira handing-over to the in-coming president Paul Marinos during the congress in Lisbon (Portugal) in 1994

presidency. I remember the collaboration we had, always after a special lunch in the canteen of LCPC in Paris.

Finally I would like to refer to my family. My sons were university students during these years. My wife Catherina offered infinite understanding with continuous support and encouragement. However, there was a compensation; she accompanied me on most of my trips!

A short note to conclude; my university, made generous contributions that significantly reduced the expenses that the president of such an Association normally incurs. I was most thankful.

I really enjoyed those four years and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been president of the IAEG. I am so content with the results that were achieved and the people that I met. Without doubt this was one of the best periods of both my scientific and my personal lives.



► The 300m high Nurek dam on the Vakhsh river (Tajikistan)