

International Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth's Interior (IASPEI)

IASPEI promotes the study of problems relating to earthquakes, the propagation of seismic waves, and the internal structure, properties, and processes of the Earth. Comprehensive minutes of the past Quadrennium and other information are on the IASPEI website, <http://www.iaspei.org/>.

IASPEI organized its 33rd General Assembly in Santiago, Chile, from October 2 to 8, 2005. It was held in a most suitable venue, the centrally located Diego Portales Conference Centre in Santiago de Chile. The Local Organizing Committee under the leadership of Diana Comte, consisted of members of the University of Chile and Instituto Geografico Militar (IGM). There were 15 scientific symposia covering all parts of the scientific fields of IASPEI, with 220 talks given and about 200 posters shown. In addition, a large number of planning and 'business' meetings were held. 360 persons from 42 countries attended.

A IASPEI Training School has been organized during the week following the General Assembly by the Commission on Education and Outreach. The School was held at the Departamento de Geofisica of the University of Chile, which proved to be an excellent venue. About 20 participants from all over Latin America attended the School. The next IASPEI General Assembly, after the IUGG one in Perugia, Italy, will be held in Capetown, South Africa, in January 2009.

The Asian Seismological Commission (ASC) had two meetings in the past Quadrennium. At the Fifth General Assembly in Yerevan, Armenia, in 2004, representatives from most Asian countries and from Africa, Europe, America, and Australia offered the results of their scientific achievements in the field of seismology, earthquake hazard assessment, and topics related to the Earth's interior. A well-prepared and well-attended International Training Course on Seismology and Mitigation of Seismic Disasters preceded the assembly.

ASC's Sixth General Assembly and the Symposium on Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation was held in Bangkok, Thailand, during 7-10 November 2006. The conference was hosted by the Thai Meteorological Department in the Siam City Hotel. About 200 participants from 35 countries and regions attended the conference, highlighted by a welcome evening with local music and dances and by a dinner cruise along the river. Two field trips have been arranged: one to the Srinagarind Dam (NW Thailand) and a post-field trip to the tsunami-hit areas around Phuket. The conference underscored the need to strengthen connections of scientists, earthquake engineers, disaster risk reduction specialists, policy-makers, and administrators to reduce the impact of earthquakes. Much attention was devoted to the great Sumatra 2004 event and the following tsunami both in science and social aspects. ASC's Seventh General Assembly will be in Tsukuba, Japan, in 2008. A pilot project, "Seismic Hazard and Risk Assessment in Asia," adopted at the ASC

Fourth General Assembly, focuses on improving hazard evaluation, assessing and reducing seismic risk, and early warning and notification. Due to the unfortunate and premature demise of prof, Serguey Balassanian, the Project leader, the related activities have undergone a considerable slowing down.

With IASPEI's financial support, the European Seismological Commission (ESC) has Organized, in the past Quadrennium, two Training Courses for Young Seismologists to expose them to state-of-the-art moment tensor inversion and seismic hazard and risk assessment procedures.

The training course in Potsdam, 2004, took place in the four days before the ESC General Assembly. Thirty students from twenty countries attended the course.

The primary aim of the Young Seismologist Training Course in Potsdam was to provide some basic requirements on moment tensor inversion, the techniques and programs used to perform manipulation and analysis of the data. Facilities for the course were well organized by the University of Potsdam, Germany.

The 2006 Training Course on "Seismic Hazard and Risk Assessment" was organized at ETH-Zurich, Switzerland, from September 11 to 14, 2006, following the ESC Geneva General Assembly. This time the course was addressed not only to young seismologists but also to young engineers. The course lasted four days and was attended by 40 participants.

The ESC Bureau endorsed a proposal to hold a seventh training course in Hersonissos, in September 2008.

The ESC 29th General Assembly was held in Potsdam, Germany during 12-17 September 2004, jointly organized by the University of Potsdam and the GeoForschungsZentrum Potsdam. About 400 participants attended the conference. A comprehensive report is to be found on the ESC website.

The European Association of Earthquake Engineering (EAEE) and the European Seismological Commission (ESC) have held in common the First European Conference on Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (1st ECEES) - 13th ECEE and the 30th ESC

General Assemblies - during 4-6 September 2006 in Geneva, Switzerland. The conference was well attended by about 1,200 participants. A comprehensive state-of-the-art volume on topical themes of the conference was published. During the ESC General Assembly the ESC Statutes have been extensively revised. Please see the ESC homepage for details: <www.esc.bgs.ac.uk>

The next general assembly will be held in Hersonissos, Crete (Greece), 7-12 September 2008.

The Third International Symposium on the effects of Surface Geology on Seismic Motion, has been held in Grenoble from August 30, to September 1, 2006, under the international umbrella of the ESG working group created jointly by IASPEI (International Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth's Interior) and

IAEE (International Association of Earthquake Engineering) two decades ago. Third in the series, following the two previous in Odawara (Japan, 1992), and Yokohama (Japan, 1998), this ESG2006 symposium has been an opportunity to picture both the state-of-the-art and state-of-practice, in the very diverse aspects of ground motion estimation. A number of invited key-note papers, and a large number of "regular" papers as well, depicted the advances and issues in various domains: strong motion data and processing techniques, non-linearity in soils, microtremor techniques, site surveys, numerical simulation, empirical estimates of ground motion and case studies. One ESG peculiarity is also to be built around benchmarking exercises on ground motion prediction. Two such benchmarks have been proposed for ESG2006. The first one has addressed the simulation of ground motion in the peculiar 3D Grenoble basin for local weak and moderate size earthquakes, while the second one investigated the capability of array noise measurements to provide reliable and robust estimates of the shear wave velocity profile.

In order to favor the exchanges and discussions, it was decided to have only plenary sessions with keynotes, benchmarks, and a few representative oral presentations spanning as much as possible the range of present-day issues in ground motion estimation. All posters have been exposed for the whole 3-day duration.

The numerous written contributions (about 150) are gathered in a two-volume Proceedings book.

The Publications Transfer Program of IASPEI's Committee for Developing Countries (CDC) has made material on seismology available to institutions in need, in particular those located in Africa, South and Latin America and Asia.

The following publications are available from the IASPEI Secretariat. IASPEI on approval distributes free copies of its publications to institutional libraries in less developed countries.

- *IASPEI: Cooperation for Better Understanding of the Earth* (26-page brochure).
- *International Handbook of Earthquake and Engineering Seismology (Part A and B)*, a two-volume comprehensive review, a state-of-the-art reference for seismologists, earthquake engineers, geologists, and geophysicists. For more information, consult the website, <http://www.academicpress.com/quake>.
- *New Manual of Seismological Observatory Practice* provides the essential scientific and technical fundamentals, reveals their inter-relationships, and motivates observatory personnel to do their jobs as carefully as possible.

Finally, IASPEI uses a bulk E-Mail System to broadcast timely announcements about forthcoming meetings and other information of interest to IASPEI members.