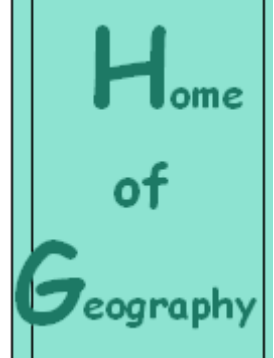




## IGU E-Newsletter

Quarterly

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# 5

July

2006

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*This Newsletter is circulated to more than 1000 individuals and bodies. Announcements, information, calls for participation in scientific events, programmes and project, are welcome.*

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On the occasion of the IGU 2006 Brisbane Conference

*Regional Responses to Global Changes:*

*A view from the Antipodes*

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*Update:* Activities of the Home of Geography



### **Roles and Visibility of Geography on the Regional Scale.**

This issue is being circulated just after the celebration of the IGU Conference on *Regional Responses to Global Changes: A View from the Antipodes*, 18 years after the International Geographical Congress held in Sydney, in 1988, on the occasion of the bi-centenary of the British landing at Port Jackson. While in 1988 discussions were essentially concerned with the whole range of geographical subject areas, in Brisbane many discussions focused on the peculiarities and roles of the Pacific local systems in the present globalising world. This leads me to devote a few words to geographical collaboration on the regional scale.

During 2000-2004, three regional networks were established by the IGU. The first network was concerned with the Commonwealth of Independent States. The *raison d'être* of this geographical coverage was essentially geopolitical, since it was established with the aim of offering a collaboration platform to those geographical communities that had been involved in the former Soviet Union. The establishment of the Mediterranean Network followed. Its geographical coverage was concerned with the Mediterranean *stricto sensu*, namely the area extending from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Dardanelles. It would be opportune if the possibility of enlarging the geographical coverage to include the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov could be considered. This would enable the IGU approach to embrace an extended cross-cultural area, namely the Mediterranean, that is acquiring increasing importance from cultural and political points of view. The third regional network concerns Latin America. Its geographical coverage was easily determined because of the cultural cement, tangibly expressed by the Spanish and Portuguese languages, which has shaped the history of this space extending from the Caribbean to the Drake Passage. Finally, the Regional Network for South East Asia, Australasia and the Pacific was established on the eve of the Brisbane Regional Conference. Its *raison d'être* is to encourage co-operation among geographers living and working in a geographical arena which, according to the Fernand Braudel's approach to world history, could be regarded as a cardinal part of the "hearth of the world". Therefore, this newborn regional body will be addressing the geographical dimensions of certain cardinal prospects and issues of our globalising world.

I am sure that I speak on behalf of the whole geographical community in expressing appreciation to all the geographers who have contributed to the establishment and start-up of these regional networks. In particular, we send warm wishes to the newly created network on the Pacific area. My hope is that a permanent consultation will be set up between these regional bodies in order to share experiences and to optimise their work.

Adalberto Vallega



## 1) IGU Regional Networks

At the present time, the IGU framework of regional networks includes:

<i>Network</i>	<i>Co-ordinator (s)</i>	<i>IGU Executive Committee liaison person</i>
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)	To be decided	To be decided
Latin America	Ana Maria Liberalli humboldt@uolsinectis.com.ar Alvaro Sanchez asc@igiris.igeograf.unam.mx	José-Luis Palacio Prieto palacio@servidor.unam.mx
Mediterranean	Mahmoud M. Ashour mmashour_99@yahoo.com	Adalberto Vallega a.vallega.@iol.it
SE Asia, Australasia and the Pacific	Philip Hirsh p.hirsch@geosci.usyd.edu.au	To be decided

## 2) News from the Mediterranean Network

### **Report of the Cairo Meeting, 2-6 April 2006**

From the Report to the IGU Executive Committee on the meeting organised by Professor Mahmoud Ashour, AinShams University, Cairo, Co-ordinator of the Mediterranean Renaissance Program (To see the complete report drafted by Anne Buttimer, IGU Past President, and totally adopted by Professor Mahmoud Ashour, see A.Buttimer, Cairo Report in the Home of Geography website.

### **Opening Session April 02, 2006**

Foreign delegates were cordially welcomed at the magnificent quarters of the Egyptian Geographical Society by the President, Professor Mohammed Abulezz, and were introduced to its various treasures of library, theatre and museum details. Professor S. Abulezz, also Chair of the IGU National Committee for Geography opened the meeting with a warm welcome to participants and assurances that he, in his role as President of EGS, had promised IGU President Adalberto Vallega of Egypt's potential role in supporting the initiative on the UN Year of Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development. Professor Mahmoud Ashour then outlined the agenda for the two-day event and invited AB, as representative of IGU, to address the meeting.

Communicating greetings from President Adalberto Vallega, AB also thanked Professor Abulezz for his gracious cordiality at the EGS and complimented Professor Mahmoud Ashour for accepting the role of coordinator for MRP and for arranging the program for this meeting. She described recent developments within IGU, especially the effort by successive Executive Committees to move beyond the inherited image of a "Euro-American Club". Special efforts have been taken to re-establish better interactions with colleagues in the Arab world, e.g., by choosing Tunis as site for the next IGC 2008. The threefold agenda announced for this Cairo meeting resonates well with the initiatives taken by the current EC (2004-2008) especially by its

President. The MRP has evolved from the regional network so competently led by Professor Maria Sala, and now encompasses a much wider range of projects. She defended the term "Renaissance" with reference to recent uses of the term, e.g., in the Presidential Address by Herman Verstappen at Den Haag (1996) and in the title of the IGU Regional Conference in Durban 2002. The Mediterranean region, meeting ground of diverse civilizations and many cultural worlds, has always held a magnetic appeal for geographers; today's "renaissance" should surely involve the discovery (or re-discovery) of ways whereby the integrity of various Mediterranean worlds may be championed while also seeking common denominators of shared concern within the region through dialogue.



*Opening Ceremony: Anne Buttimer, Safey Abulezz and Mahmoud Ashour (photo G.Bellezza)*

These are also the aims of the Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development (CCHD) project, she noted. In fact, what more appropriate basis could one find to illustrate the close affinity of these two major initiatives (MRP and CCHD) than the issue of Arid Lands, Humankind and Environment? In the long historical sweep of human civilizations throughout the arid zones of the Mediterranean World, issues of water availability, access and use have been acute. Among the many potential common denominators of shared concern, surely those of water, aridity and sustainable ways of life are among the most urgent. It make a great deal of sense, therefore, that members of this IGU Commission are also participating in this meeting, contributing to and benefiting from the other two themes. The Mediterranean is, of course, only one of the Commission's concerns, but it is one which could afford valuable insight into the variety of ways in which humanity has fashioned its livelihoods in regions of limited water supply through time and space. This endeavour reflects a major priority in international science today, i.e., to re-discover some of the wisdom in indigenous geographical knowledges.

**Session One, Cultures and Civilization for Human Development, Chair: Anne Buttimer.**

Introducing the theme, AB recalled the initial rationale underlying the proposal by Jean-Robert Pitte and Adalberto Vallega, i.e., that much of contemporary discourse on sustainable development has tended to focus on ecological and economic dimensions, and that insufficient attention had been paid to cultural dimensions. CCHD, it was hoped, could reveal the importance of these neglected aspects. Suggesting a special role for geography in this effort, she referred to the literal meaning of cultus as cultivation, as in agriculture, aquaculture, horticulture, silviculture. While other sciences may focus on institutional, moral, aesthetic and/or political aspects of culture, surely one of geography's fields of proven expertise is in the analysis of genres de vie (ways of livelihood) with specific attention to the human modes of relating to natural

resources and environments. Today one could refer to these as "indigenous geographical knowledges", to be evaluated in terms of their role (positive or negative) in human development. Bellezza acknowledged the friendship expressed by hosts and re-iterated the rationale underlying the CCHD initiative, explaining why the term "human" rather than "sustainable" development, noting that globalisation also produces inequalities. The Action Plan involves both a scientific - interdisciplinary agenda as well as an Outreach program both leading to a potential request to UN for a Year of Cultures and Civilizations. One of the aims of the workshop held in December 2005 at the Home of Geography in Rome, was to reduce the impression of IGU as a 'Euro-American Club': this aim was achieved, with the active participation of over 100 people from 26 different countries from all continents, culminating in the signing of the agreement between IGU and ALECSO. About the Mediterranean Renaissance Program that we are launching in Cairo two further points needed emphasis. The first is to avoid the impression that here we are launching a "Mediterranean Club", based on a supposed superiority of Mediterranean Culture. None of us thinks of any "superiority" of Mediterranean (not to say "European") culture: MRP merely arises as a follow up to the preceding work of the Mediterranean Regional Network. At the same time, we not only wish that many initiatives will be undertaken by the IGU Networks of Latin America and Russia, but also that other Regional Networks will be set up in Asia. The second impression to eliminate is that, within the MRP, some may think that the European side is more dominant than the Asiatic and African sides. It is sufficient to notice that the forthcoming major initiatives decided by IGU will take place in Tunis 2008 and Tel-Aviv 2010: that is, in the southern and eastern part of Mediterranean Sea.

Toumi then presented a comprehensive overview on human geographies of the Mediterranean. The query: "Is there a typical Mediterranean?" (literally, a "Mediterranean type") introduced an impressive presentation entitled "Les Méditerranéens" which was structured around three questions: 1) How many are there?, 2) Where are they? and (3) Who are they?

1) What populations to include: (a) those living in countries with borders on the Mediterranean Sea (i.e., half a billion), (b) those permanently resident in administrative jurisdictions bordering the Mediterranean, i.e., excluding areas which are distant from the Sea, e.g., Northern France, Southern Morocco, Eastern Syria (311.5 millions); so far, however, there is no consensus among scientists about the precise criteria of inclusion and exclusion, or (c) qualifying the criteria of "residential" to exclude not only those living too far away from the Sea but also the recently arrived immigrants who are not of Mediterranean origin. Other qualitative criteria would be needed, e.g., styles of life, Mediterranean cuisine, body language and sociability. Taking these into account one could definitely focus on ca 150 million people concentrated on approximately 12-13% of the territories bordering the Mediterranean. Tuomi then presented demographic profiles of all these countries, revealing major differences in fertility, mortality and overall growth rates.

2) Where are they? Three geographical characteristics of Mediterranean ways of dwelling - Orotropism (mountain and hill-side habitat), Heliotropism (seeking the sunlight and) and Meditropism (syncretism of diverse elements). The most remarkable feature recently, however, population concentration in cities, again showing significant differences among countries in urban size and regional networks.

3) Who are they? At the interface of three continents, the Mediterranean was a vast lake for intercultural encounters since the IV century B.C. Today one finds numerous minority populations living far away from their original homes, many of whom may not wish to be publicly identified. Throughout there is the love of the olive and summer twilight, special breads

and late evening meals. There are great contrasts of wealth and poverty in the Mediterranean world within and among countries.

The paper concluded with reference to the traumas of today - geopolitical, economic and social - which emit an atmosphere of "sad lake". Can one now really hope for a genuine "renaissance" in the Mediterranean spirit?

Omar El-Farouk's paper focussed specifically on Egypt as a poly-dimensional and typically Mediterranean country, its three fundamental elements - the river, the desert, and the sea - keys to its history and geography. The river symbolises its African component, the desert its Asian-Arab-Islamic component, and the sea its Mediterranean one. The history of Egypt is also the history of the Mediterranean. Egyptian ways of life were in good order as long as it maintained good contact with the sea. Today there is a vacuum which Egypt should endeavour to fill vis-a-vis the Mediterranean World. A summary flow chart comprising all elements of Egyptian culture, history and geography, was then presented.

The final paper, by Roberto Gatti, offered perspectives on inter-cultural dialogue based on the ideas of the existentialist philosopher Louis Massignon (1883-1962). In the inter-personal encounter with "others", certain principles need to be acknowledged, e.g., respect for the most specific, irreplaceable and intangible aspect of each culture, i.e., its spiritual heritage. This demands a special kind of education for inter-cultural dialogue, one which confronts issues of universalism and relativism, traditionalism and secularism, and most especially the recognition that Christian Europe and the Muslim world have much to learn from each other.

**Session Two, Mediterranean Renaissance Program. Chair: Professor Mohammed S.**

**Abulezz**

The Chair introduced the speakers and also presented a comprehensive overview of the geopolitical and geophysical features of the Mediterranean basin. Culturally old, yet geologically young, this land-locked sea has been regarded as Mare Nostrum for several cultures, its two basins the scene for dramatic events during the Cold War period. Much has changed vis-a-vis these aspects in recent years, but fundamental tensions between eastern and western parts of the Mediterranean still exist. These ideas afforded an ideal complement to the overview on cultural and socio-demographic features presented earlier by Ali Tuomi.

Maria Sala's presentation on "Socio-Economic Impacts on Sustainability of Mediterranean Forest Environments" summarised results from case studies conducted around the Mediterranean. As geomorphologist her personal focus on bio-physical aspects was enlarged to embrace the more "geographic" aspects of forestry, and in fact now the IGU Commission on Land Degradation has a specific sub-group devoted to Mediterranean issues. Sala's lecture provided graphic and statistical information on past and present threats to forest environments, e.g., deforestation, clear-cutting, urbanization, forest fires and lack of government control. A critical review of past experience revealed the importance of property rights, tensions between ecologists and urban dwellers, and major cultural differences within and among the countries of the Mediterranean. Traditional forestry practices, e.g., dehesa and montado were shown to be potentially more sustainable than those dictated by market forces or even government policy.

Dr. Theano Terkenli elaborated on cultural and symbolic aspects of "Greece and the Mediterranean", proposing an agenda for collaboration with others in the general aims of renaissance. Landscape and identity were proposed as key bases for such collaboration. Drawing on the ideas of Lawrence Durrell she recounted several key features of Mediterranean landscapes, e.g., variable dry climate, barren coastlines, complex relief and biodiversity. The physical environments of Greece have a remarkably variable geomorphology and an intricate insular geography; its human geography is characterised by its long traditions of urban life, harsh

conditions of rural life, and its attractive coastal landscapes. Focussing on contemporary challenges of tourism, she noted the threats to landscape now posed by illegal construction and property development. "billboard habitats", and the lack of State control in a setting where the State Archeological Service has virtual hegemony on planning decisions. She argued strongly for Mediterranean co-operation on developing a set of well-orchestrated inter-regional measures for the protection and sustainable development of cultural landscapes as repositories of collective meaning.

Dr Mahmoud M Ahmed, from the National Authority for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences lectured on "The Role of Space Technology and GIS in the Integrated Coastal Zone Management" with specific focus on the sea wall erected a decade ago to protect Egypt's northern Nile coastline from erosion. Coastal instability at Rosetta promontory has been continuous during the last century. Severe erosion was detected along other cells over the delta coast. Many development projects were planned and constructed during the last five decades without any consideration given to these problems. This phenomenon was also on the agenda for the field excursion to Alexandria, and indeed the lecture by Ahmed provided an excellent introduction.

### **Session Three. Arid Lands, Humankind and Environment. Chair: Giuliano Bellezza**

The Opening paper by Professor Nabil S. Embabi, author of the impressive volume, *Geomorphology of Egypt*, raised the evocative question "Why playas attract so much interest in Egypt?". The details soon provided answers. Playas (some of them hosting temporary or ephemeral lakes in the desert) have served as gathering points for animals and humans in arid lands throughout history; they reveal substantial mineral wealth; they have been sites for agricultural innovations and products; and recently they reveal vital information on climate change over time. This well-illustrated presentation included graphic evidence from archeological analyses of artefacts as well as from geo-chemical analyses of sediments to reveal especially the evidence of climate change. Illustrations from the relatively recent playa of Farafra also demonstrated its relevance for agricultural innovation and sustainable production.

Dr Olaf Bubenzer, newly appointed Secretary for the IGU Commission, presented images of new technological possibilities for remote sensing of topography, especially playa depressions and sand dunes. His paper entitled "New elevation data for geomorphological and geo-archeological research in arid regions" provided fresh perspectives on the issue of representation - how to capture the changing configuration over time in the height (as well as the shape) of sand dunes. Illustrations included not only measurements (and identification of height errors) made within the Rhine valley in Germany, but also sites within Egypt where improved accuracy was gained on the identification of water resources and of aeolian influences on playa depression and sand dune formation during the Holocene.

Finally, Professor Mahmoud Ashour presented a lecture on the playa of Ebu-El-Egl in Egypt's Western Desert. This complimented the earlier presentation by Professor Embabi. Details on the importance of woodland shade within the playa, archeological evidence from Neolithic caves, combined with analyses of layered rock, all point toward the multi-faceted importance of playas in historical times.

Before the dispersal of participants, a brief meeting was arranged for members of the IGU Commission. This included Professor Mahmoud Ashour, Chair, newly appointed Commission Secretary Dr. Olaf Bubenzer, Dr. Ulrik Mårtensson and Professor Nabil S. Embabi. Questions on Commission procedure were raised and co-ordinates of IGU website and Secretariat were supplied. AB raised questions on the substantive content of Commission agenda, particularly on the "humankind" element. It was generally acknowledged that insights from the Cairo workshop, particularly those relating to indigenous geographical knowledges of livelihood practices which

could be sustainable in arid environments should be highlighted in Commission reports to the Tunis IGC 2008.



The following days the participants enjoyed a field trip to Alexandria and the Mediterranean coast, but were impressed by the excessive new building activity on the shore (*photo G.Bellezza*).

#### **b) Follow up in the Brisbane IGU Regional Conference**

Maria Paradiso, MRP Implementation n. 5: updating after the Brisbane Regional Conference

The report presents some decisions taken by the MRP steering committee in its meeting in Brisbane on 4 July 2006 (and some ongoing discussions via e-mail). Present at the meeting were: the Coordinator Mahmoud Ashour, Adalberto Vallega, Anne Buttimer, Giuliano Bellezza, Ron Abler, Aharon Kellerman, Maria Paradiso. Prof. Adnane Hayder, Chair of Tunis IGU Congress was invited for discussing opportunities for coordination with the CNOC committee.

Mahmoud Ashour reported on the Cairo meeting in last April. He raised conceptual questions on the definition of the Mediterranean area. He further proposed an educational workshop for Tunis 2008 recalling a previous suggestion by Adalberto Vallega. Mahmoud Ashour also expressed the need for an MRP website, and the need to publish Cairo meeting papers. He also asked for reimbursement for future mission in the meeting of Arab geographers, in order to promote MRP.

Adalberto Vallega emphasized the need for taking actions for MRP and stressed the Tunis event as an important momentum to convey thoughts and actions. He stated that currently financial aid is not available. MRP materials already prepared could be sent over to Giuliano Bellezza for insertion in HoG-IGU website.

Three major issues were examined in the meeting: MRP sessions for Tunis Conference; an educational workshop tentatively entitled 'Educational Workshop on Coastal Planning using GIS and Remote Sensing'; preparations towards the 2008 IGU Congress in Tunis through a letter to IGU commissions and national committees aiming at the raising interest and networking for MRP activities in the congress. Anne Buttimer also drew the attention to existing Mediterranean data bank. Aharon Kellerman proposed for better effectiveness a meeting in Rome of all Mediterranean chairs of national committees and chairs of relevant commissions, a meeting which would definitely yield many sessions. Giuliano Bellezza informed that he submitted a request to raise funds for HofG meetings to a bank in Rome and some feedback will arrive in November 2006. Some of the eventual funds could be addressed to the meeting with chairs of national committees and relevant commissions.



Aharon Kellerman proposed that MRP should provide Mediterranean contents for the congress theme: "Building together our territories!" The preferred type of contents would be sessions and presentations focusing on the oneness of the Mediterranean basin. Another option is sessions/presentations discussing Mediterranean topics on a country or regional basis. The series of Mediterranean sessions of both types could be introduced by a plenary or another general session, in which Ali Toumi will present a version of his Cairo paper: "Les Méditerranées", as an excellent introduction to the region. Sessions and presentations should be primarily sought from the commissions and to some degree also from the national committees. Other sessions could be organized by individuals, and he provided some examples, suggested by him and other scholars. To remember but a few: Water, The sea, Culture and Tourism, Politics, Communication and Information, Physical Geography. Among the suggestions, an Educational Workshop on Coastal Planning using GIS and Remote Sensing was proposed, and A. Buttimer asked M. Paradiso to provide a project on this.

The complete Report can be seen in the Home of Geography website (in the News 2206).

### **3) New IGU Regional Network for Southeast Asia, Australasia and the Southwest Pacific**

IGU has established its fourth Regional Network, adding to the existing Latin America, Mediterranean and Commonwealth of Independent States IGU Regional Networks. Taking advantage of the regional location of the July 2006 IGU Conference in Brisbane, the new network brings together geographers from Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Southwest Pacific island nations including Papua New Guinea. The Network aims to foster collaborative research and teaching initiatives, mutual support and mentoring activity. The Network has adopted the acronym SEAASWP, to be pronounced "Sea-Swap", reflecting its regional coverage, maritime extent and spirit of exchange.

SEAASWP is coordinated by Associate Professor Philip Hirsch from the School of Geosciences, University of Sydney. Professor Hirsch convened a full-day pre-conference workshop in Brisbane on 2 July 2006, involving more than 30 geographers from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Several members of the IGU Executive also attended the workshop, and IGU President Professor Adalberto Vallega and Professor Anne Buttimer both addressed the final session, lending their support to the Network. The workshop covered both thematic aspects of the Regional Network and organizational issues. It received generous funding support from the Australian Academy of Science, AusAID's International Seminar Support Scheme, the New Zealand Geographical Society, ChATSEA and the Australian Mekong Resource Centre.

The overarching area of interest of SEAASWP is theory and practice in teaching and research on development and post-development, within which there is room for sub-themes and more focused study groups and projects. SEAASWP builds on several existing collaborative initiatives, and it provides a framework for developing new areas. The existing initiatives include:

- ChATSEA – The Challenge of the Agrarian Transition in Southeast Asia – a collaborative research program whose core is a grouping of geographers from ten universities in SE Asia, Australia, Canada and the UK, and whose funding comes from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

- A program on community economies involving geographers from Australia, the Philippines and Indonesia supported by AusAID
- The Mekong Learning Initiative, a teaching, learning and research network involving universities in SE Asia and Australia with NGO support
- A transnational communities project, based in New Zealand and engaging geographers in the SE Asia / Pacific region

In addition to the pre-conference workshop, SEAASWP was the subject of a plenary session at the main conference and also formed the basis for a grouping of seven panel sessions under the headings of *Critical Geographies of the Asia-Pacific: Power, Identity and Globalisation*, and *Agrarian Transitions in Southeast Asia and the Pacific: Environmental Change and Regulation*.

The Regional Network will establish a website based at the University of Sydney, and it invites participation from geographers either located or interested in the region and the themes it covers. The University of Sydney is providing support through its International Program Development Fund for the first year of SEAASWP's establishment. The next major face-to-face SEAASWP event is the biennial conference of the Southeast Asian Geography Association (SEAGA) 28-30 November 2006. For further information please see [www.seaga.co.nr](http://www.seaga.co.nr).

For further information and to join the network, please contact Ms Kate Griffiths at [kate.griffiths@geosci.usyd.edu.au](mailto:kate.griffiths@geosci.usyd.edu.au).



#### 4) Regional Conferences in the Global Change Era

The Global Change problématique, and the related role of geographers in the framework of international programmes and projects concerned with climate change and subsequent impacts on human communities, with particular emphasis on the human dimensions of global change, was first widely discussed at the 1988 International Geographical Congress convened in Sydney. In that start-up phase it was clear that the meso-regional dimensions of the global change problématique would be a key subject for geographical discussions and investigations. Hence, the increased importance of the regional conferences. Since then, six conferences have been convened:

- 1990 Beijing
- 1994 Prague
- 1995 Havana
- 1998 Lisbon
- 2002 Durban
- 2006 Brisbane

The series began by focusing on the role of the Far East and has concluded with the role of the Pacific, particularly its South-eastern region. This is a meaningful signal of the expanding geographical interest of the Pacific regions facing global change and globalisation.

### **5) The Role of the 2006 Brisbane Conference**

The IGU 2006 Brisbane Conference theme, *Regional Responses to Global Change: A View from the Antipodes*, focused on regional responses in a changing world with the emphasis on tropical and arid zones, particularly in Australia, New Zealand, Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Key symposia dealt with: i) the local and regional impact of resource exploitation and community responses; ii) mobilisation of regional capabilities to sustain and enhance social, cultural and environmental values; and iii) constructive responses to natural disasters, climatic change and other global-scale processes. Analysis of contemporary development issues was a key theme, including the role of indigenous/non-indigenous co-management of resources. The conference enabled a timely audit and review of these issues and an opportunity for agenda-setting research discussion. These involved debates on the transnational endeavours which geographers seek to promote and on the policy and political outcomes of geographers' work.

The Conference programme included a package of specialist conference sessions on such relevant, contemporary regional themes as: vulnerability and hazard management; dynamic processes (catchment, coastal, etc.), environmental change; managing impacts of human actions in forestry, coastal development, tourism and urbanisation; migration; policy development and implementation and governance issues.

### **6) The IGU President's Speech at the Opening Session**

The Regional Conferences convened in the early twenty-first century by the International Geographical Union are concerned with crucial parts of the world. In Durban, on the occasion of the 2002 Conference, attention focused on the *problématique* of the sub-Saharan area, which is a critical nucleus of the United Nations' strategy against underdevelopment. Now, in Brisbane, attention is focused on the Pacific, which is the most progressive part of the world. In 2010, on the occasion of the Tel Aviv Conference, attention will focus on the Mediterranean region, where the most demanding *problématique* of intercultural dialogue has emerged.

These events may be regarded as steps of a unique discourse focusing on modernity, its problems and prospects. Along this discursive pathway, the Brisbane Conference on *Regional Responses to Global Changes: A View from the Antipodes*, enjoys a central position in many respects.

The Pacific has been deeply affected by climate change. Moreover, the impact of globalisation has been intense: along the American and Japanese sides, the second generation of megalopolises has come to the fore; along the Chinese side, the third generation is emerging; Singapore, Hong Kong, together with other main seaports of the South East and the Far East, are now the key points of the world's maritime containerised trade; the majority of the world's financial nodes are concentrated in this region; and the mineral richness of the seabed is even greater than that of the world's continental areas. Finally, a wide range of issues crucial to

cultures have affected the Pacific, and the need to safeguard the cultural identities of small islands has acquired unexpected importance.

By focusing on such a vast crucial and dynamic space, the role of geography, as a leading discipline in the representation of spatial manifestations of modernity and emerging post-modernity, has taken tangible form. As a result, a trio of new, binding and extensive subject areas — global change, globalisation, and intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue — has acquired an expanding role on the menu of geography, and has increasingly called for interdisciplinary approaches. Moreover, the demand for geographical knowledge from human communities has strengthened and expanded, and has increasingly challenged geographers to communicate with the public and the media, thereby establishing new means of communication and new representation tools.

When this complex changing framework is borne in mind, it may be agreed that, in this present time in history, the IGU has to address an unprecedented range of conditions, and needs to tailor its approaches and organisation to changing conditions and prospects. Hence a wide menu of operational fields has arisen on the horizon of the new century.

1 — The work and outcomes of the IGU research bodies, namely the Commissions, Task Forces and other occasional bodies, need to be gathered together and better valued. Those results that could help convene international research projects and programmes, hopefully framed in interdisciplinary perspectives, such as the Oceans 21, Mediterranean Renaissance, and Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development programmes, may be regarded as initiatives pertaining to this stream.

2 — Efforts to co-operate with non-geographical organisations must be made. In this respect, the co-operation which has been established in the context of ICSU GeoUnions, and the role of founder partner assumed by the IGU in the framework of the International Year of Planet Earth, are significant steps forward.

3 — Following the recommendations made by Kofi Annan, collaboration with UN intergovernmental organisations should be broadened and optimised. In this respect, efforts have been made to co-operate with UNESCO and FAO.

4 — Education has gained a central role in the framework of the IGU's activity. Establishing educational principles, designing educational approaches, and convening Olympiads — thus paving the way to collaboration by local geographical organisations — on the one hand, and interacting with local educational authorities and agencies, on the other, have shaped a demanding operational field.

5 — To deal with the specific issues affecting individual parts of the world, co-operation among geographers is also needed on the regional scale. In recent times, three regional networks have been established with respect to the Commonwealth of Independent States, Latin America and the Mediterranean. It is hoped that a network will also be established in the Pacific.

6 — The more a bottom-up approach expands and gains relevance in the framework of the IGU, the better the world's geographical community can tackle the challenges set out above. In this

respect, the *Ten Theses* document, dealing with the Union's strategy and operational fields, has been included in the Brisbane registration packet. Geographers are cordially invited to reply to the questions enunciated in this document. Moreover, the IGU's communication tools have been put into operation: the website of the Home of Geography has been added to that of the IGU, and the IGU E-Newsletter is now distributed quarterly. Finally, the Home of Geography has expanded its operational fields and will be acquiring the role of a permanent technical IGU office. It is strongly hoped that funds for maintaining and valuing this body can be raised.

Sustained by the awareness of the crucial role geography plays in our times, the international geographical community which identifies with the International Geographical Union is challenged to respond effectively to the relevant demanding input. In this framework, the IGU Regional Conference in Brisbane plays a leading role. The more the participation in discussions and collaboration with the design of new scientific pathways is ample and intense, the more the world's geographical community will benefit from this event.

Hence, on behalf of the whole Union, allow me to express my warmest appreciation to the Brisbane Organising Committee and to all the colleagues who have contributed to the planning and organisation of this event.

I wish us all every success in our work, in the spirit of collaboration, and in the belief of the essential role of geography in the scientific and social arenas.

*Adalberto Vallega*  
President, International Geographical Union

## **7) The Geography Olympiad in Brisbane**

The best geography students from 23 countries from all over the world participated in the 6th International Geography Olympiad in Brisbane, Australia, from 28 June to 3 July 2006. This Olympiad was held under the auspices of the International Geographical Union Olympiad Task Force. The Olympiad 2006 was held in conjunction with the IGU Regional Conference, 3 - 7 July, and the Commission on Geographical Education Symposium, 26 June - 2 July. The 2006 Olympiad was being hosted by The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Inc and the Australian Geography Teachers' Association Ltd.

The aims of the International Geography Olympiad are to (1) stimulate active interest in geographical and environmental studies among young people; (2) contribute positively to debate about the importance of geography as a senior secondary school subject; (3) facilitate social contacts between young people from different countries and doing so, contribute to the understanding between nations. The official language of the International Geography Olympiad is English.

More countries than ever participated in the 2006 Olympiad in Brisbane: Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, China-Beijing, China-Taipeh, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. Each participating country consisted

of a team of four students of secondary schools and two adults team leaders. Students' ages were between 16 and 19 years old. Students were selected through a national competition.

The Olympiad consisted of three parts: a written response test (40% of total marks), a substantial fieldwork exercise (40%), and a multimedia test (20%). Students completed almost all test assignments individually. The three test elements were organised on different days. For past examples of questions, see the Olympiad website <http://www.geoolympiad.org> which is sponsored by ESRI.

As part of the two-day fieldwork exercise students investigated the geographical characteristics of Kelvin Grove, Brisbane (see photo). The task was to explore this urban area in order to evaluate development plans for this part of Brisbane.

During the Olympiad a cultural evening was organised in which teams presented a piece typical of their homeland (dance or music). This resulted in a nice evening that contributed to mutual understanding and friendship. During the Olympiad teams also gave a presentation about some geographical themes in their country. These presentations helped to differentiate existing images of the participating countries. In addition to the cultural evening and the geographical presentations the students participated in different excursions outside Brisbane. After the Olympiad most of the teams made a week excursion through the area north or west of Brisbane.

Who won the 2006 Olympiad? Jacek Próchniak from Poland was the best of all 96 students. The second place was for Jakub Redlicki from Poland and Alexandra Livia Petrusca from Romania was number three. The medal awarding ceremony was held at the opening of the IGU symposium and IGU president professor Adalberto Vallega was the first to congratulate the brilliant young geographers.

The ranking of the winning teams was: (1) Poland, (2) Estonia and (3) Romania.

At the evaluation meeting students and team leaders said to be happy with this Olympiad. The whole Olympiad was a great success and a good promotion for geography and international understanding.

The Task Force and team leaders agreed on further improvement of the Olympiad and continuing teamwork in preparing the next International Geography Olympiad in Tunis in 2008.

Joop van der Schee

Co-chair of the IGU Task Force for the Olympiad



## 8) 2008 International Geographical Congress

The first circular of the 2008 International Geographical Congress on *Construire ensemble nos territoires* was circulated during the Brisbane conference and a particular Session was dedicated to the issue. Many questions were asked, and in some cases the Steering Committee answered that the problems posed had already been solved. A new and more complete Circular will be prepared by the end of August, and as soon as possible it will be posted on the IGU and Home websites.

Nonetheless, some important news can be anticipated now. The Congress will be held on 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> August 2008 under the High Patronage of His Excellency the President of the Tunisian Republic Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The general theme of the Congress is “Building together our Territories!”, and among the other themes the “Evolution of the Geographic Thought” can be mentioned; many other themes will be given due attention and several field trips and excursions will be organized.

The venue is the Kram Exhibition Centre, situated nearly 10 km from the town centre. A shuttle bus service from the town centre to the Kram will be organized, possibly on a free basis. The organizers are studying the possibility to offer reduced fees for students and other categories of participants.

## 9) Next Regional Conference in Tel Aviv, 2010

The 2010 IGU Regional Conference will be held in Tel Aviv, Israel, during the summer. Invitation leaflets were distributed in Brisbane, during the 2006 Conference.

The Organising Committee includes:

*Daniel Felsenstein*, co-program organizer (Hebrew University, Member, Steering Committee of the IGU Economic Geography Commission); e-mail: [msdfels@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:msdfels@mscc.huji.ac.il)

*Tovi Fenster*, co-program organizer (Tel-Aviv University, Chair, IGU Commission on Gender Geography); e-mail: [tobiws@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:tobiws@post.tau.ac.il)

*Aharon Kellerman*, Chair, and IGU and international contact (University of Haifa, Chair, IGU Commission on the Geography of the Information Society); e-mail: [akeller@univ.haifa.ac.il](mailto:akeller@univ.haifa.ac.il)

*Izhak Schnell*, co-local organizer (Tel-Aviv University, Vice-Chair, IGU Commission on Urban Geography); e-mail: [schnell@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:schnell@post.tau.ac.il)

*Michael Sofer*, co-local organizer (Bar-Ilan University, Chair, IGU Commission on Local Development); e-mail: [soferm1@mail.biu.ac.il](mailto:soferm1@mail.biu.ac.il)



## 10) Priority Area Assessment on Capacity Building in Science

In 2005, as part of a strategic planning exercise, the ICSU Committee on Scientific Planning and Review (CSPR) commissioned three Priority Area Assessments (PAA): Environments and Relation to Sustainable Development; Scientific Data and Information; and Capacity Building in Science. A number of eminent scientists were invited to produce a report on their vision for developments in the area of the PAA, to review ongoing activities of the ICSU family, and on the basis of an analysis of the identified needs and the existing spectrum of activities, to propose action that ICSU might wish to take. The conclusions of the Panel responsible for Capacity Building in Science were recently presented in the “Priority Area Assessment on Capacity Building in Science” booklet, which has been circulated by ICSU (<http://www.icsu.org>).

The following sections, concerned with making capacity building a priority, communication between science and society, and linking education, research and society are from the executive summary of the booklet.

### *Making Scientific Capacity Building a Priority*

Clear national strategies for capacity building are necessary to link science and technology with goals for economic growth and human well-being, to improve science-based decision making and problem solving, and to build future workforces capable of capturing the advances of science and technology. Meeting the challenges of the 21st century and responding to the UN Millennium Development Goals will require international approaches to capacity building that reinforce national strategies, engage society (decision makers as well as the public and private sectors), and build strong regional and international scientific communities working together toward common goals. Ensuring that efforts are on track will require improvements in census-taking, measurement, and assessment.

- ICSU, and its Members, should collaborate with major partners [e.g., UNESCO, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS), the InterAcademy Panel (IAP), and the InterAcademy Council (IAC)] to address the importance of national policies and strategies for science and science education.
- The ICSU family should employ standardized protocols and indicators (e.g., those developed by UNESCO and/or the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) to assess the impact of their own capacity building programmes and encourage OECD and UNESCO to document — and if possible, measure — the scientific capacities of countries in terms of the supplies and demands of scientific human capital, their scientific infrastructures, their physical and financial capital (e.g., their levels of investment in and the maintenance of scientific enterprises, including, inter alia, universities and other bodies), and their capacity to integrate scientific knowledge into the broader development of social capital.

### *Communicating between Science and Society*

The rapid advance of science and technology requires a renewed and strengthened relationship between science and society. Improvements in public appreciation of science through formal and informal methods, as well as efforts to engage the public and the media with science, are needed to help ensure that public policy is informed by science.



- ICSU should identify and promote initiatives among its membership aimed at encouraging the public appreciation of scientific issues and the importance of science to society, thereby helping to build a scientifically literate global society. In this context, ICSU should develop a strategy for improving its public outreach — including a more interactive Web-based efforts and public fora, such as science days or fairs associated with major scientific meetings of its Unions or Interdisciplinary Bodies.

### *Strengthening the Links among Education, Research, and Society*

Strengthening the links among education, research, and society is essential for building future scientifically trained workforces, developing effective national systems of innovation, and connecting the benefits of science with the goals of society. A variety of institutions are designed to reinforce the national, regional, and global connections among education, research, and society. These institutions need continuing support to be effective. Universities play an important role in educating future workforces and in nurturing the basic sciences. Increasingly, they are challenged to strike a balance between academic excellence and research competitiveness, and playing a greater role in national innovation systems. The scientific community needs to help improve incentive structures that recruit talented students to universities and into careers in science, as well as working toward increasing access for scientists and universities to educational materials and scientific publications.

- ICSU should encourage Scientific Unions, National Members and Interdisciplinary Bodies to consider constraints in career-development in their fields of expertise. The ICSU family should involve itself in formulating policies in consultation with governments, private-sector employers, and science-funding agencies, and to urge them to address these problems, creating conditions for attracting young talent, especially women, to careers in science.

## 11) Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development



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The implementation of this cardinal initiative, which IGU is undertaking in conjunction with other geographical and non-geographical organisations, has so far attained the following outcomes:

### *UNESCO*

Collaboration with UNESCO (Culture Sector, Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue) began in April. Co-operation areas by UNESCO: general debates organised around key issues and discourse regarding interculturality, dialogue and development; mainstreaming

cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development; linking indigenous knowledge systems; cultural mapping with indigenous or other local communities; and linking biological and cultural diversity. To put this collaboration in motion, i) a paper to demonstrate the complementarity of the CCHD International Year and the 2001 Year on Dialogue Among Civilizations has been drafted; ii) a proposal for an international event on the 2003 (Intangible Culture), and 2005 (Cultural Diversity) UNESCO conventions has been drafted.

#### *United Nations University*

Collaboration with the United Nations University (UNU) began in April. In this respect: i) the UNU is regarded as a CCHD Operational Sponsor; ii) Prof. Hans van Ginkel, Rector of the UNU, is regarded as a CCHD Supporter; iii) the UNU will support the proposal to proclaim a UN Year on Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development; iv) collaboration is expected to be in the field of education, a principal component of the CCHD Action Plan.

#### *International Council for Science (ICSU) and International Social Science Council (ISSC)*

The ICSU Office for Africa, and the ISSC have agreed to collaborate with CCHD as Operational Partners.

#### *Sponsors and Partners*

At the present time, 26 organisations have agreed to become CCHD sponsors or partners.

#### *Supporters*

At the present time, 77 people from 33 countries are included in the Roster of CCHD Supporters. The list is included in Annex 1 (Supporter Roster.doc). Members of the Management Team and Regional Promoters are kindly invited to call on scientists, and personalities from the fields of culture, politics and the media to become Supporters.

#### *Governmental Organisations*

A number of governments have been, or will be invited, to collaborate with CCHD regarding the proposal to UNESCO and the UN General Assembly to proclaim an International Year on Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development.

#### *IGU National Committees*

In April, a call for collaboration was circulated to the IGU National Committees. So far, 15 Committees have reacted positively and intend to collaborate in various respects.

#### *Geographical Societies and Associations*

A call for collaboration has been sent to approximately 130 geographical societies and associations all over the world.

#### *Géographie et Cultures Article*

An article by A. Vallega, presenting the CCHD initiative and its objectives, is currently in print and will be published shortly in the *Géographie et Cultures* journal.

### *How to co.operate with CCHD*

Scientists from both geography and non-geographical disciplines who are willing to support and co-operate with CCHD are cordially invited to download and fill in the form in .doc format (see Annexe 1), returning it to the Home of Geography.

## **12) Collaboration with Romania**

In June, a Memorandum of Understanding between IGU and Romanian geographical bodies (Romanian Geographical Society (RGS), and the Human Geographer Association of Romania (HGAR)) was signed in Bucharest. According to this agreement:

1. The Romanian geographical bodies will:
  - a. Assist the IGU in organising meetings that are held in Romania and Italy;
  - b. Offer information and materials on Romanian geography to the IGU Home of Geography;
  - c. Assist researchers working under IGU auspices in Romania;
  - d. Include links to the IGU and IGU Home of Geography web sites on appropriate Romanian web sites (on each RGS and HGAR web sites);
  - e. Foster visits by Romanian academics and scholars to the IGU Home of Geography; and
  - f. Participate actively in the IGU Geographic Olympiad.
2. The IGU will:
  - a. Work to enhance the participation of Romanian geographers in international research programmes in which IGU participates;
  - b. Highlight the accomplishments of Romanian geographers in international circles;
  - c. Include Romanian geographers in its collaborative programmes with intergovernmental organizations and the United Nations;
  - d. Augment the role of Romanian geographers in the International Year programmes with which IGU is affiliated;
  - e. Include information about RGS-HGAR and its programmes in the IGU and IGU Home of Geography publications and web sites; and
  - f. Make the assistance and resources of the IGU Home of Geography available to research visitors from Romania.

The agreement with Romania was preceded by those with China-Taiwan (2004) and China-Beijing (2005).



### **13) Festival International de Géographie**

Following the Memorandum of Understanding, signed in 2005 between the IGU and the Festival Internationale de Géographie, the IGU will participate in the 2006 Festival (Saint-Dié-des-Vosges; September 28 - October 1st; [www.ville-saintdie.fr](http://www.ville-saintdie.fr) ), by:

- mounting an IGU stand, managed by the Home of Geography, where information will be given and material will be distributed;
- holding a press conference with A. Vallega, where the organisations, role and cardinal initiatives of the Union will be presented and discussed.

### **14) National Geographical Festivals**

A key aspect of the collaboration established in 2005 between IGU and the *Festival International de Géographie* is the promotion of, and technical assistance with, National Geographical Festivals (NGFs). In this respect, IGU National Committees were invited to convene such initiatives. The main points of the guidelines, which were circulated together with this invitation, include:

#### *Objective*

Tentatively, the NGF is a group of events, held over a 3- or 4-day period, which aims to:

- meet the demand for geographical data and knowledge from the local human communities;
- hold public discussions of the geographical implications of such key issues as globalisation, sustainable development, inter-cultural and inter-civilizational dialogue;
- offer a platform for discussing those current geographical issues which have emerged at a local level, and their interactions with global processes, e.g. the consequences of climate change, the standardisation of production and consumption patterns, and the safeguarding of local identities;
- satisfying the curiosity of the public, particularly the younger generations, regarding exploration of the world, including cyber-exploration, by presenting high-tech mapping, GIS and other computer-based representation techniques.

#### *Agenda*

The NGF's agenda may include any kind of event that encourages participation, including:

- debates and round tables;
- lectures;
- movies, including competition between movies of geographical interest;
- exhibitions of maps, software and any other products of geographical interest;
- competitions of geographical interest, e.g. Olympiads and Internet-based competitions;
- folklore events, such as folk music, folk dance and traditional cuisine;
- any other initiative consistent with the local cultural, social and environmental contexts.

#### *Promotion*

The NGF is promoted by local geographical bodies, hopefully in collaboration with such local institutions and organisations as ministerial agencies, ministries of culture and education, municipalities and foundations.

#### *Assistance*

The IGU, together with the Festival International de Géographie (FIG), is able to give technical assistance for the organisation and implementation of individual festivals. In particular, the Home of Geography will provide assistance, particularly with respect to the dissemination of information and calls for participation through its website and the IGU Electronic Newsletter.

#### *Frequency*

According to how successful the first edition is, the FG may be held periodically, on a yearly, two-yearly or other basis.

#### *Festival Network*

Following the *Protocole de Coopération*, signed in 2005, the IGU and FIG will help the establishment of a network of national festivals in order to share experiences, strengthen co-operation and optimise the individual initiatives.

### **15) Strategy for IGU contributions to the International Year of Planet Earth**

The IGU Regional Conference in Brisbane afforded an excellent occasion to explore a strategy for encouraging international collaboration among geographers around the ten selected IYPE themes, as follows:

- Groundwater
- Climate
- Earth and Health
- Deep Earth
- Megacities
- Resources
- Hazards
- Soil
- Earth and Life
- Oceans

At its meeting on June 27-July 1, 2006, the IGU Executive Committee asked Anne Buttimer to design a strategy for IGU's potential contributions to the UN International Year of Planet Earth. Fortunately, it was possible to discuss this with colleagues who have already participated in those ICSU Geo-Unions collaborative projects which have actually laid the foundations for IYPE.

Anne Buttimer began work immediately, starting discussions with geographers who are engaged on these particular themes.

## **UPDATE: Activities in the Home of Geography**

### **1. CCHD Fundraising:**

After sending the final report to the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Roma for the first year's funding, the Director, Prof Giuliano Bellezza (hereafter GB), sent the forms to apply for funding for a second year, but the Commission which will evaluate the applications will not meet before autumn. GB contacted several times the Comune di Roma, but it has been pointless in the last few months due to the three elections which were held in Italy. In any case, GB is maintaining contact with some friends of his in the Roman Administration and will meet them at the end of July 2007.

### **2. CCHD Partners/Sponsors**

The HG has been assigned the task of updating the rosters of Partners and Sponsors, and began asking for help identifying geographical societies and organisations with a letter to the IGU Executive Committee and CCHD Regional Promoters. Just a couple of people made suggestions of whom to contact for information, but this didn't lead anywhere. Prof Palacio-Prieto was very helpful, sending a list regarding Latin America prepared by Alvaro Sanchez.

The Secretary, Dawn Bissell (hereafter DB), identified almost all of the societies through research on the internet: some contacts are therefore out of date. DB continues to update the list as new names arrive, and has created an email mailing list of the various categories.

Afterwards, on behalf of Prof Adalberto Vallega (hereafter AV), DB contacted all the identified geographical societies and organisations, sending them personalised letters (including the CCHD Call for collaboration and the Partner-Sponsor form as attachments).

### **3. CCHD Supporters**

GB tried to gather more names in Cairo, but did not find suitable people to ask.

GB included the Supporters' Form in the April e-newsletter, together with a brief 'publicity' text. GB had intended to collect more Supporters' names in Brisbane, but as Ron Abler managed to include the form in the relevant material distributed at the Conference, the completed forms will probably be sent to him.

### **4. CCHD International Organisations**

The Call for collaboration was sent to a list of international scientific bodies, and a reminder letter was sent in May. Personalised letters were sent.

### **5. CCHD Italian organisations**

HG tried to identify contact details of Italian branches of international organisations, in order to create a list of international organisations present in Italy. DB is currently creating a list from internet research.

HG attempted to contact the Comune di Roma which may have a suitable list, but (see above, point 1) we could not receive any attention in the last few months.

## **6. CCHD Vatican**

The appropriate structures to contact in the Vatican City were identified as the Pontificio Consiglio della Cultura, whose President, Cardinal Paul Poupard, gave a very encouraging answer. AV recently met two of his representatives.

## **7. Newsletter**

Starting from the April issue, AV's suggestion to include the number of recipients on the front of the newsletter has been implemented. At AV's proposal, the e-Newsletter is now being sent to all IGU corresponding members.

## **8. Mailing lists**

DB updated all the IGU Commission, NC etc addresses on the Home mailing lists, using the country or commission title as the name, and including the chair's details on a secondary page of each address entry – however there are still other bodies in the address book for whom no extra details have been included. We sent a request for updated contact details in the April e-newsletter, and asked the Commissions for updated details in Brisbane. A fresh email appeal for updated contact details from the IGU bodies has just been made. It must be stressed that the collaboration of all of the IGU bodies is vital to maintaining the mailing lists.

## **9. Translations**

Translation into French of what appears on the Website and, particularly, in the e-Newsletter is very important. We made several unsuccessful requests for help in translating the material, despite the HG's suggestion to provide summaries or only translate the major articles.

DB sent emails asking for help to: Centre Culturel St Louis de France, Rome, and the Centro di risorse ed informazioni dell'ufficio culturale dell'Ambasciata di Francia a Roma, but received no reply. After receiving valuable help from the French students of the Ligamed association, who participated in the December Workshop, DB placed announcements on an internet site in May seeking volunteer French translators and received several offers of help. Translation of the April newsletter has been completed. Some CCHD materials are also being translated by these volunteers.

Eventually, in Brisbane, Prof. Andre-Louis Sanguin offered to help, revising and amending the translations done by the Ligamed students and the volunteers. Also in Brisbane, Prof. M. Makki, Chairman of the Board of the Saudi Geographical Society, agreed to translate important IGU documents and the e-Newsletter into Arabic.

## **10. FIG**

The HG presented a flyer in Brisbane, updated for 2006, which will be distributed at the FIG in Saint Dié des Vosges.

GB is currently preparing a memo setting out how the IGU could be promoted in this Festival (circulation of flyers, call for corresponding membership, presentation of IGU publications, etc).

## **11. National Festivals**

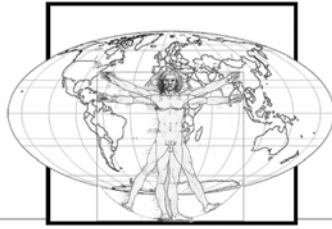
GB is in contact with L. Cassi regarding participation at the Italian "Festa della Geografia" in Florence (30 November to 3 December 2006). We hope to hold a half-day presentation of the IGU and of its major initiatives in the booth of the *Association of Italian Geography Teachers*.

## **12. Miscellaneous**

A. Kellerman and A-L. Sanguin expressed interest in organising a meeting at the Home for their Commissions, while Ana Maria Liberali, Coordinator of the Centro Humboldt (Buenos Aires), proposed holding a Conference in Argentina to GB, and he forwarded her mail to Vallega.

Kalpana Markandey, (Chair, Department of Geography, Osmania University, Hyderabad), organiser of the 1<sup>st</sup> International Indian Geography Congress, 5-7 October 2006, asked to have a presentation on the IGU and the CCHD. The Presidents of the IGU and of the Home of Geography (AV and Markku Loytonen) appointed GB as IGU representative.





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I am pleased to share and support the spirit and objective of the Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development initiative.

I strongly hope that the United Nations will proclaim an International Year on this subject area.

*Name, first, middle and family [capital letters]:*

*Signature*

*Place and date*

*Personal details*

Title (Prof. Dr. Mr Ms)

Affiliation

Position

Address

Postal Code

State

Country

Tel

Fax

E-mail

Please fill this form in and e-mail or fax it to the Home of Geography, Rome, Italy:

fax: +39 - 06 - 7759 1183

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