Highlights

ISRM Membership in Asia continued to grow strongly, with an increase of more than 10% in members from 2,138 in 2014 to 2,454 in 2015. Asia has a total of 55 Corporate Members, mainly from Japan and China, representing about 40% of the total corporate membership in the ISRM.

China NG and Singapore NG won the inaugural ISRM Best Performing National Group Awards. Asian students made up six of the nine shortlisted finalists in the Rocha Medal selection and won the Rocha Medal and one runner up for the 2016 Rocha Medal Awards.

Japan NG organised a very successful 8th Asian Rock Mechanics Symposium in Oct 2014 in Sapporo, Japan, with more than 600 participants. Nepal Society for Rock Mechanics was officially accepted as the new NG for Nepal and organised the 1st National Conference on 20 March 2015 in Kathmandu. Vietnam NG organised Vietrock 2015, an ISRM Specialised Conference, on 12-13 March 2015, with more than 200 participants, including more than 50 overseas participants from 12 countries.

The 9th Asian Rock Mechanics Symposium (ARMS9) will be held on 16-20 October 2016, at the Sheraton Bali Kuta Resort, in Bali, Indonesia. The 10th Asian Rock Mechanics Symposium (ARMS 10 Singapore) will be held in Oct/Nov 2018 in Singapore, and will be jointly organised by the Singapore and China NGs. ARMS 10 Singapore has been approved by the ISRM Board as the 2018 Regional Symposium.

Prof Seokwon Jeon of Korea NG was elected Vice President for Asia for the term of 2015-2019. Prof Manchao He of China NG and Prof Norikazu Shimizu were appointed Vice President at Large by the ISRM New Board.

China

The main activities include: The CSRME 13th National Congress held in Taiyuan, Shanxi on Sept. 21-15, 2014 with 700 participants; 3rd ISRM Young Scholars’ Symposium on Rock Mechanics held on November 8-10th, 2014, Xi’an, China, with more than 140 papers presented. The Chinese Union for Mining Science Innovation was established on January 2015. China NG membership grew from 1036 in 2014 to 1386 in 2015.

India

Main activities include: Setting up of Task Force on ROCK MECHANICS EDUCATION AND RESEARCH to address the urgent need for rock mechanics education in India, and planning for upcoming events: Symposium on “Advances in Instrumentation, Geo-monitoring and Validation”, 23-24 July 2015, New Delhi; Rock India 2015, November/December 2015, Dhanbad; ISRM Specialized Conference on “Recent Advances in Rock Engineering”, 16-18 November 2016, Bengaluru; Rock Mechanics Conference of SAARC Countries in 2017, Delhi/Kathmandu. SAARC stands for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and has 8 member countries (India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Maldives).

Indonesia

Main activities include: continuing preparation for the 9th Asian Rock Mechanics Symposium (ARMS9) to be held 16-20 October 2014, in Bali; and organisation of the 3rd National Seminar and Workshop on Geomechanics, held in February 2015 in Jakarta, in collaboration with with a number of universities in Indonesia.

Iran
Main activities include: The 5th Iranian Rock Mechanics Conference (IRMC5) held in May 2014 at Tarbiat Modares University in Tehran, with about 300 participants. Three seminars were held by the group on: Nov. 26 2014, Dec. 31 2014, and Feb. 18 2015. Membership increased by 11 to 165.

Israel
A new academic programme for a double-track degree in structural engineering and geology that the Israel NG helped develop was already running at the universities. This programme was developed in support of the increasing need for engineers in infrastructure development, with a special emphasis in tunnelling.

Japan
Main activities include: Organising the successful The 8th Asian Rock Mechanics Symposium, October 2014, Sapporo, Japan. The English name of Japan NG was changed from “Japanese Committee for Rock Mechanics (JCRM)” to “Japanese Society for Rock Mechanics (JSRM)” (March 2015). News letters (Nos. 112 - 114) & Rock Net mail (Nos. 470 - 498) have been published and distributed to the Japanese members. The International Journal of JSRM Vol.10 No.2 and Vol.11 No.1 have been published online.

Korea

Middle East
No report of other activities.

Nepal
The Nepal Society for Rock Mechanics was officially accepted as the new NG for Nepal and organised the 1st National Conference on 20 March 2015 in Kathmandu with about 200 participants.

Singapore
Main activities include: Short Course on Rock Mechanics and Empirical Methods in Rock Engineering by Nick Barton, 3-5 September 2014 with 86 participants; SRMEG Outstanding Paper competition and SRMEG Book Prize given to final-year university students, both designed to encourage participation by young members.

Southeast Asia
No report was submitted from Southeast Asia. The South East Asia Geotechnical Society has decided to transfer its secretariat role to the group in Taipei.

Vietnam
Main activities include: Vietrock 2015, an ISRM Specialized Conference, in Hanoi, held on 12-13 March 2015 with more than 200 participants of which about 50 are from overseas from 12 countries.