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WELCOME

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This is my last message to you as Chair of the Commission on Geography and Public Policy, as in August 2008 I finish the eight-years term, which the regulations of the IGU foresee. But I am very happy to inform you that Jan Bucek from the Comenius University of Bratislava, Slovakia, whom many of you know, has agreed to be nominated as the next candidate for Chair for 2008-2012.

There will also be a change in the Commissions name and focus to Commission of Geography of Governance. We want to enlarge by that the focus to all forms of Governance and we hope to meet in that way your interests as well as the needs of a global society.

I enjoyed very much these eight years which were very active and productive and I am glad we managed to keep our reputation as one of the most active Commissions in the IGU. Of course this could not happen without the strong support and dedication of the Commission members, especially the organizers of the meetings. You find a short version of our report for 2004-2008 attached and I want to thank all of you who participated very actively in our meetings and published about the most important issues of the Commission.

I want to thank very warmly also the members of the steering Committee, who supported our work in many different and effective ways. Some of them have also reached the 8 years of service and will be replaced by other colleagues, who have agreed to take over, together with Jan as Chair.

Finally, I wish you all and the Commission a lot of success and achievements in the future and I am looking forward to see you at the great next event, the IGC in Tunis in August.

Berne, June 2008

Doris Wastl-Walter

IGU Commission on Geography and Public Policy

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Steering Committee and Chair position renewal

After four fruitful years of work in the commission, we have to suggest changes in the Steering Committee and we have to find a new Chair who will be elected at the IGC in Tunis in August. According to the IGU rules, members of the steering Committee and the Chair can only serve 8 years and thus we have to change the team at the IGC. After several discussions and brainstorming sessions at our last meetings and different informal occasions, we suggest as new Chair Jan Bucek from Comenius University in Bratislava. He is working in the Commission since years, has organised a very interesting meeting and co-organised others and I am sure the Commission will be in the best hands.

The proposal for the IGU General Assembly for the new Steering Committee is the following:

Commission Chair: Ján Bucek
Department of Human Geography and Demography, Comenius University, Mlynska dolina G Bratislava 842 15, SLOVAKIA
Full Members
Eiki Berg Deans Office: Tiigi 78, Rooms 116-117, 50410 Tartu, ESTONIA
Christine Bichsel Department of Geography, University of Berne, Hallerstrasse 12, CH-3012 Bern, SWITZERLAND
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Shannon O'Lear Department of Geography, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045-7613, USA
Pushkar K. Pradhan Central Department of Geography Tribhuvan University GPO Box, 5488 Kathmandu, NEPAL
Eran Razin Department of Geography, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem 91905, ISRAEL
Andrew Ryder Buckingham Building, Lion Terrace, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 3HE, GREAT BRITAIN
Xiaohong Zhang Institute of Chinese Historical Geography, Fudan University, 220 Handan Rd, Shanghai 200433, CHINA

IGU Commission on Geography and Public Policy

This is a great team of distinguished Geographers, male and female, from very different parts of the world and we thank all of them for their readiness to take over these functions and wish them all the best.

FUTURE CONFERENCES

Dates of the Future Commission Meetings

In the moment, the following IGU Conferences are confirmed, where the Commission will hold special sessions

2008

August 12th - 15th.
TUNIS (Tunisia)
IGC International Geographical Congress
"Collaboratively Building our Territories"

2010

Summer.
TEL AVIV (Israel)
IGU Regional Conference.

2009

There will be a special meeting of the Commission in August 2009 in Bratislava, organised by our new Chair

2011

a meeting is planned. But not yet organised. If you have any suggestions or if you are willing to organise a meeting, you are most welcome.

Tunis, Tunisia, August 12-15, 2008
2008 International Geographical Congress
"Building together our territories!"

All relevant information on the 31st International Geographical Congress will be found on the website of the organising committees of the Tunisian Geographers Association.

<http://www.igc-tunis2008.com/>

Tel-Aviv, Israel, Summer 2010
2010 IGU Regional Conference

The Israeli National Commission for Geography is delighted to invite you to attend the IGU Regional Conference in the summer of 2010 in Tel-Aviv, Israel.

IGU Commission on Geography and Public Policy

The region provides visitors with an opportunity to explore the dynamism of a growing Mediterranean economy, trying to accommodate both lifestyle-driven development and ecological challenges in an arid region. An engagement with the region combines a first-hand encounter of the factors driving wider economic, political and social change coupled with the role played by local actors or institutions. Israel presents you with a most diversified geographical experience.

Numerous exciting field trips before, during and after the conference will permit exposure to these unique places.

Tel-Aviv is a bustling metropolitan area of close to 3 million inhabitants. It stretches along the Mediterranean coastline, enjoying a beautiful promenade along which most hotels are located. With no rain in the summer, average temperatures range between 25-33 degrees Celsius. Tel-Aviv and its surrounding area offer an abundance of accommodation facilities ranging from youth hostels to five-star hotels.

Conference steering committee

- Prof. Daniel Felsenstein, Co-program organizer, Department of Geography, Hebrew University, Jerusalem. E-mail: msdfels@mscc.huji.ac.il.
- Prof. Tovi Fenster, Co-program organizer, Department of Geography, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv. E-mail: tobiws@post.tau.ac.il.
- Prof. Aharon Kellerman, Chair, Department of Geography, University of Haifa, Haifa. E-mail: akeller@univ.haifa.ac.il.
- Prof. Itzhak Schnell, Co-local organizer, Department of Geography, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv. E-mail: schnell@post.tau.ac.il.
- Dr. Michael Sofer, Co-local organizer, Department of Geography, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan. E-mail: soferm1@mail.biu.ac.il.

Sponsored by the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

New Books

There is a new book, just out of print, from the meeting of the Commission last year in Nepal:

PUBLIC POLICY AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT – Opportunities and constraints.
ed. by Pushkar K Pradhan, Doris Wastl-Walter , Steven Folmar.

Attached you find the table of content. You can order a copy (US\$ 30/copy) by post upon request and paying postal charge in advance or you can also get it in pdf.format

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Attached you find also more information on recent books, published by our colleague Hellmut Wollmann and others, most importantly on the new book:

Local Government reforms in Countries of Transition – a global perspective
Edited by Fred Lazin, Matt Evans, Vincent Hoffmann- Martinot and Hellmut Wollmann.