

The International Tunnelling Association held its 23rd Annual Meeting in Vienna, Austria from April 13 to 16, in conjunction with the World Tunnel Congress '97 organised by the Austrian Society of Engineers and Architects and the Austrian Society for Geomechanics. The meeting was attended by representatives, delegates, observers and working group members from 38 of the 45 Member Nations of the Association.

MEMBERSHIP

The Association has registered the membership of 2 new Member Nations, Bulgaria and Slovenia, and of 50 new Affiliate Members (7 Corporate Members and 43 Individual Members), taking the total to 45 Member Nations and 250 Affiliate Members (86 Corporate Members and 164 Individual Members).

ITA OPEN SESSION DURING THE CONGRESS

The 1997 ITA Open Session was devoted to the "Choice of Tunnelling Method". Eleven excellent papers from 8 countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Slovak Republic and Switzerland) were presented with the chairmanship of ITA President S. Pelizza and Congress Board Chairman P. Göbl. A panel of three ITA experts, Z. Eisenstein (Moderator), R.J. Robbins and A. Ravlo, focused on the subject and led the debate.

WORKING GROUPS

With a view to contributing to high quality for projects utilising the underground, a new ITA Working Group - WG 16, "Quality", Animateur: L. Casati (Italy) - shall prepare reports on:

- practice, codes, standards (collected information)
- analyses and recommendations (group discussions)
- The group intends to conclude within 3 years.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

ITA is pursuing active cooperation with the United Nations:

- participation in the HABITAT II Conference in Istanbul and reflections on follow-up.
- organisation, with ECOSOC and the concerned societies, of two forums on how establishing a methodology to determine the TBM costs and selection criteria of the TBM for the Gibraltar Crossing (cf pages 20 & 21).
- examination, with UNESCO, of possible cooperation. Such cooperation should especially lead, in the coming years, to the organisation of an event

with the UN in Southeast Asia.

- ITA is also developing relationships with the European Union, especially for its research programme and with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE "SISTER ORGANISATIONS"

ITA confirms excellent relationships with its "sister organisations", especially the World Road Association (PIARC), the International Society for Rock Mechanics (ISRM), and the International Society for Trenchless Technology (ISTT). A joint Working Group should be organised with ISTT and ITA should cosponsor the International Conference GEO ENG 2000 in Australia (with ISRM, ISSMFE, IAEG in particular).

NEXT MEETINGS

- **São Paulo (Brazil), 25-30 April 1998**, during the ITA-AITES 1998 Congress: "Tunnels and Metropolises".
- **Oslo (Norway), 29 May-3 June 1999**, during the ITA-AITES 1999 Congress: "Underground Construction for the Future".
- **in South Africa (Durban, Johannesburg or Sun City) in April 2000.**