

President's Corner: Back in Africa



Jorge Zornberg

Dear Members of the IGS,

We are extremely pleased to invite you to join us for the second African Regional Conference and Exhibition of the International Geosynthetic Society (IGS), GeoAfrica 2013. The event is organized by the Ghanaian Chapter of the IGS and will be held in Accra, Ghana from 18 to 20 November 2013 (geoafrica2013.com).

Ghana represents the enormous opportunity for geosynthetic technologies in Africa. With a GDP which has grown from 7B to 40B USD in less than 10 years Ghana's need for infrastructure and industrial support is significant. Due to the existence of major

projects in Mining, Transportation and the Environmental Sectors Africa presents numerous, exciting opportunities for the application of geosynthetic solutions. Ghana in particular is in the process of major oil & gas, as well as mining and infrastructure development.

Regarding the particular venue of this landmark conference, it should be noted that Accra has been selected as the number 4 "must visit" place to visit in 2013 (out of 43 locations) by the New York Times (see insert). The beauty and safety of this destination is particularly highlighted in this note. The venue of the conference will be the Accra Convention Center, which has already hosted the most important technical events in Ghana.

Because of the significant Ghanaian and African growth in infrastructure, GeoAfrica 2013 will attract top decision makers from the government and the private sector including prospective users, academics, vendors, policy makers and representatives of various national and international organizations working in the arena of the Geosynthetic industry and technology. Global and Africa-specific perspectives and experiences will be featured in the technical program.

For information on the technical contributions and submission of abstracts go to:

www.geoafrica2013.com.

Important deadlines are:

- **30 April 2013: Deadline for receipt of abstracts**
- **15 September 2013: Deadline for final receipt of papers**



View of the Accra Convention Center, the venue for GeoAfrica 2013.

GeoAfrica 2013 is chaired by Prof. S.I.K. Ampadu, Provost of the leading University in Ghana. This conference benefits from the rich experience gained by GIGSA, the IGS South African Chapter, during the organization of the highly successful GeoAfrica 2009 Conference. In fact, the Technical Committee of this truly African Conference is chaired by GIGSA's Edoardo Zannoni. The technical program of GeoAfrica 2013 will emphasize the existing and potential application of geosynthetic technologies in the African context. This implies technological and social advancement of the industry to suit the needs of Africa and bolster developments appropriate to Africa. The technical and educational programs will include:

- An intense "Geosynthetic Education" day, featuring lectures and training offered by the leading experts in the geosynthetic industry, both at the beginning and advanced levels.
- Two days of plenary and parallel technical sessions including panel discussions on a wide range of geosynthetic applications, but with special focus on the use of geosynthetics in mining and transportation applications.
- Keynote lectures by leading geosynthetic experts in the areas of geosynthetics in mining, pavements, and environmental applications.

The technical program will be complemented by a first-rate exhibit hall which, because of the particularly suitable layout of the Accra Convention Center, will be fully integrated with the technical program. We are also looking forward to the unique social events throughout the conference, including a much-anticipated "Evening of Culture." The official language of the conference will be English.

Growth of the geosynthetics in Africa has been identified as key to the continued growth of the IGS and the geosynthetics industry. We look forward to seeing you in Accra in what will be a memorable GeoAfrica 2013.

All best regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorge Zornberg', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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"Accra, the capital of Ghana, has welcomed business travelers for years. Now tourists are streaming in, a byproduct of the fact that the country has Africa's fastest-growing economy and is also one of its safest destinations... On Accra's packed beaches, you'll see everything from snake handlers to plantain peddlers. Head to the upscale neighborhood of Osu and hit the tree house-inspired terrace at Buka for fine West African food. The best Ghanaian adventures start with a giant plate of tomato-smothered tilapia and banku — a fermented yeast paste that's tastier than it sounds — washed down with local Star beer. —"

New York Times selected Accra as its #4 out of 46 "Must Visit" destinations in 2013. [Read the full article](#)