

To: Dr. Rasik Ravindra, Secretary General, 36th IGC
Prof. V.P. Dimri, President, 36th IGC



Re. Postponement and reschedule of the 36th IGC

February 27, 2020

Dear Dr. Ravindra,

Upon the information conveyed by you on behalf of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) of 36th IGC on Feb 21, 2020, which informed that “...*Consequent upon the situation emerging out of spread of COVID-19, the Government of India, keeping in mind the safety of large number of international delegates, as also of domestic participants, has decided to delay the 36th IGC to a later date.*”, the IGC Committee (IGCC) immediately informed the relevant organizations and individuals, including the IUGS Executive Committee and National Delegates and other organization whom the postponement may affect.

Based on the request you conveyed further on Feb 24, 2020 for rescheduling the IGC in 9-14 November 2020 as first option and 16-21 November 2020 as the second option and in the same venue, the IGCC quickly conducted consultations with the IUGS EC and IUGS-IGC Joint Council members for their inputs and comments. With the suggestion of the IGCC, LOC timely conducted an opinion survey to a total of 7,235 registered participants.

The results reported by the LOC indicate that *among the 2,393 responses up to February 27, 2020, over 86% of the registered participants are willing to participate in the 36th International Geological Congress in Delhi, India as per the suggested schedule: November 09 – 14, 2020.*

The motion (“...*the IUGS Executive Committee agrees to postpone the 36th Geological Congress (36th IGC) to November as proposed by the LOC...*”) was electronically conducted by the IUGS EC. It passed with nine positive votes and one negative vote.

A survey conducted among Lead Delegates to IUGS-IGC Joint Council is likewise favorable.

On the basis of this information, the IGCC felt there has been adequate discussions on the issue, and a motion (“...*IGCC approves the proposal of rescheduling the 36th IGC in the new dates in November as proposed by the LOC of the 36th IGC...*”) was electronically conducted by the IGCC members. It was approved unanimously by the 7 members of the IGCC.

Therefore, I write on behalf of the IGCC to you, the LOC of 36th IGC, to implement the rescheduled IGC for the new dates in November. Although most members voted to support the rescheduling of the congress, extensive comments were

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suggested that should be treated as conditions for the approval. These comments and suggestions ought to be seriously considered by the LOC in preparation for the rescheduled IGC.

The main suggestions include urging the Government of India to provide necessary support so that the LOC can adequately subsidize and absorb the financial losses incurred by the postponement on the participants. It is essential for the LOC to closely work together with IUGS to rebuild the program and attract more participants to enhance the attendance of the congress. Other comments can be conveyed by the IGCC members orally. A new Memorandum of Understanding needs to be developed based on the existing one, which expires on March 8.

Finally, the IGCC appreciates the prompt measures and actions the LOC has been taking to handling the urgent matter of the postponement of the IGC. IGCC hopes, with the strong support from the Government of India and collective efforts of the LOC with other relevant organizations, the rescheduled 36th IGC to be a success.

Sincerely yours,



Prof. Qiuming Cheng
President, International Union of Geological Sciences
Co-Chair of IGCC



Prof. V.P. Dimri
President of the 36th IGC
Co-chair of IGCC

Cc:

Dr. Greg Botha, Secretary General 35th IGC, IGCC member
Prof. Richard Viljoen, President 35th IGC, IGCC member
Prof. Neil Williams, President 34th IGC, IGCC member
Prof. Stanley C. Finney, Secretary General of IUGS, IGCC member
Prof. Dr. Hiroshi Kitazato, Treasurer of IUGS, IGCC member
Dr. Rasik Ravindra, Secretary General 36th IGC, IGCC Secretary General
Dr. Dinesh Gupta, Co-President 36th IGC, IGCC Observer



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36th INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS RESCHEDULED FOR 9-14 NOVEMBER 2020

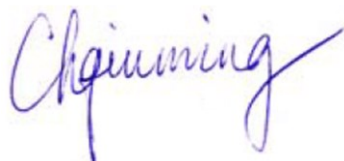
The COVID-19 epidemic is causing considerable disruption worldwide. In view of the health risk and mindful that about 5,000 delegates from 120 countries were then registered, on 21 February the Government of India announced the postponement of the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC), originally scheduled for 2-8 March, to a date to be defined later. Such momentous decision came to a point when preparations for the IGC were being finalized and delegates were getting ready to travel to India. IUGS believes that it is now of paramount importance for the parties involved in the Congress to quickly reach a consensus on a common line of action, in order to provide all the participants (delegates from Adhering and Affiliated Organizations, representatives of IUGS Commissions, Task Groups and Initiatives, registered members, exhibitors, industrial and scientific sponsors, observers) with clear, unequivocal information.

The parties involved in different roles in the IGC are: (i) the Local Organizing Committee (LOC), i.e. the constituted entity that has assumed legal and financial responsibility for the forthcoming IGC; (ii) the International Geological Congress Committee (IGCC), i.e. the IUGS-IGC joint committee dealing with IGC matters, which may be called upon by the LOC for advice; and (iii) the IUGS Executive Committee (EC), i.e. the IUGS body responsible for the overall administration of the Union. Following a proposal by the LOC on 24 February to postpone the IGC to November, the IUGS EC has agreed to that request. An informal poll, held amongst the National Delegates to the IGC and the other Council participants, reached the same conclusion. After these results, it was the turn of the IGCC to vote on the LOC proposal, which was unanimously endorsed on 26 February. On 27 February, the LOC released the results of an official poll according to which 86% of the 2,400 respondents are willing to participate in the November IGC.

The duration of the present epidemic is not foreseeable. Nonetheless, the IUGS will provide full cooperation to the LOC in order to meet the new timeline. To this end, we urge all IUGS constituent bodies to plan to ensure the highest level possible of participation in the 36th IGC in November. It is essential that, as in the past, the four-year cycle of IUGS activities is formally reported. Among other matters, the progress of all IUGS bodies must be reviewed, new officers must be elected, and the venue for the 2028 IGC decided. We commend the Indian Local Organizing Committee for its resilience in the face of a most unexpected event which has put at risk years of dedicated preparatory work. It is now crucial that all 5,000 registered participants receive clear information on the new program and activities as soon as they become available, as well as details on the handling of previous hotel and Congress registrations.

During its 142 years of history, the International Geological Congress has weathered all kinds of unexpected events. For the common good of the global geological community we should now all strive to ensure that the 2020 edition is a success.

Best regards,



Prof. Dr. Qiuming Cheng
President, International Union of Geological Sciences

Released 28 February 2020
