

## The First International Congress of Applied Geology Mashhad, Iran, April 26–29th, 2010

Khorasan ("where the sun rises up") is Iran's largest province. It is a homeland of many great Iranian poets, writers and scholars, the cradle of the Farsi language and of the Persian civilization. Mashhad, the capital city of the Khorasan E Razavi Province, the second largest city (two and half million inhabitants) of Iran, is an extensive agglomeration in the Kashaf River Valley, 850 km E of Tehran between the Binalood and Hezar-Masjed Mountains. It is Iran's holiest city and a place of pilgrimage for Shi'ite Moslems from all over the world.

There are two main universities in Mashhad. The first is the State Ferdowsi University, the second is the Islamic Azad University (IAU)—a chain of universities with a total of over 350 branches around Iran, and 5 branches overseas. The Islamic Azad University—Mashhad Campus (IAUM) was established in December, 1982 as a response to a high demand for higher education. It became a member of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World, at its Second General Assembly in Kowalalampour, Malaysia in April 2001.

The **International Congress of Applied Geology** was held by the IAUM Department of Geology as the first international Scientific Congress organized in Iran. More than five hundred geoscientists participated from numerous geoscientific institutions in seventeen countries (besides Iran namely Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Croatia, Germany, India, Iraq, Mexico, Montenegro, Oman, Pakistan, Russia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey and United States of America). 145 oral presentations and 255 posters (all in English) were presented in four scientific sessions dealing with geochemistry, mining geology, mineralogy and mineral resources, economic geology, industrial minerals, engineering geology, geotechnics, hydrogeology, geophysics, environmental geology, geothermal resources, climate change, biogeoscience, geomedicine, remote sensing and geoinformational systems, geotourism, geohazards, paleontology, stratigraphy, sequence stratigraphy, sedimentology, Quaternary geology, soil science, marine geology, geomorphology and geoarcheology.



The Congress was followed by three one-day fieldtrips selected according to major themes as followed:



1—Geology of the Kopet Dagh Mountains. The participants in this fieldtrip had a unique opportunity to touch magnificent geological structures of NE Iran, including complete section through the Jurassic-Paleogene sequence in the eastern continuation of the Crimea–Great Caucasus mountain chain.

2—Center of turquoise production in ancient city of Neyshabur. Neyshabur located 115 km west of Mashhad in the province of Khorasan has been the major source of Firouz-e (Turquoise) for thousands of years and it still is a major center of Turquoise trade. In addition, Neyshabur was the home of the great poet and mathematician Hakim Omar-e-Khayyam and the great mystical poet Attar-e Neyshaburi.

3—Igneous and metamorphic rocks in Binaloud near Mashhad. Mashhad is situated in the Cimmerian suture zone between the Iran microcontinent and Turan Plate foreland. The accretion belt is filled with remnants of the Paleotethys oceanic bottom, with partly metamorphosed Jurassic oceanic sediments and with bodies of Cimmerian granitoids.

At the end of the Congress, the first meeting of the International Scientific Board of the **IRANIAN JOURNAL OF EARTH SCIENCES** was held under the guidance of its President, Dr. Habib Mollaei. The Board consists of members from Azerbaijan (Nazim A. Imamverdiyev), Canada (D. J. W. Pe-piper, G. Pe-piper), France (E. Barrier, M. F. Brunet), India (M. Pandit, R. Sherma), Iran (M. Abasspour Tehrani, M. Allameh, A. Aryaei, A. R. Ashouri, H. Emami, M. E. Fazel Valipour, M. Ghavidel Syooki, M. H. Karimpour, A. R. Lashkaripour, H. Mollaei, F. Moore, M.T.H. Mossavian, R. Moussavi Harami, M. R. Poursoltani, H. A. Torshizian), Montenegro (M. Pajovic), Slovakia (J. Michalik), Turkey (Nadim Copty, Ali Demirci), United States of America (M. Allavi, Fares Howari, S. Saadat). This new periodical starts with great energy, enthusiasm and with the intention of filling the gap in information on geoscientific research in this part of the world. At the time of the Congress, the editors counted 142 new contributions. We wish our colleagues success and a good start!

