

A special welcome from the new president of IAEG Rafiq Azzam.

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

First of all, I would like to wish all IAEG members a successful and prosperous 2019.

As the new elected IAEG president, it is my great honor and privilege to me to serve our association according to our mission and for the benefit of our members.

Most of you know me as one of the vice presidents for Europe and I would like to continue my efforts toward improved IAEG services.

In the past 4 years, the president and the executive have focused on many important aspects to improve the services of IAEG. Of course, we will continue to finalize these issues. In the last four years many improvements have been realized and I would like to thank the Executive for its excellent performance. Also, I would like to welcome the new Executive members who are enthusiastic to continue the modernization process.

Developing the Association needs a vision for the future and is a long-term task of the Executive and Council to achieve the targets.

Some important tasks and actions for the next 4 years are:

- Modernization of IAEG including all IT aspects. For successful operation, an IT Commission shall look into all IT aspects to improve the services to our members. An Advisory Board to the Executive shall work out strategy plan for the modernization process.
- Continuation of Reaching out to our members and intensifying the relationship and networking between IAEG and National Groups. Supporting the establishment of new National Groups.
- Reactivating and supporting the regional conferences, joint events with different national groups, and promoting the young engineering geologists to organize sessions within these conferences.
- Revision of the work of the commissions, and develop mechanisms to evaluate their work progress. Commission chairs should organize sessions in regional conferences and report to Executive.
- Offer further education and training to the members such as summer and winter schools, especially for young engineering geologists, by inspiring senior members to offer courses and visit low-income countries to support their national group in education and organization of scientific events.
- IAEG can act as a catalyst to mobilize the synergy of Universities, Research Institutes and Industry.
- Encourage the National Groups to organize well-focused field trips for senior and young engineering geologists together.
- Intensify the interaction activities between Young Engineering Geologists (YEG) and the Executive and allocating an annual budget for the activities of YEG.

This list can only be an example, much more issues will rise during our work.

I am confident that the new executive committee and the Presidents of the National Groups are motivated to work hand in hand to achieve the targets, to promote IAEG in many countries and to improve its visibility in the society.

Rafiq Azzam