



MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS MEETING OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN GEOLOGICAL SURVEYS HELD AT THE SAFIR MAZAFRAN HOTEL, ALGIERS, ALGERIA ON THE 12TH OF MAY 2010

Summary of the Conference:

- The conference recorded 80 participants, of which 38 were the representatives of Geological Surveys of 9 African countries, 6 represented international institutions and 36 represented Algerian geological or related institutions;
- The first day of the conference was devoted to listening to important presentations by the Commission of the Geological Map of the World (Paris) on the benefits of Africa's equipping itself with small-scale maps, by EuroGeoSurveys (Brussels) which offered its financial and scientific aid and the benefit of its experience, by ECOWAS (Abuja) which wishes to assist and, by the Institute of Physics of the Globe (Strasbourg) with which we have begun a project for the development of a seismotectonic map;
- The day devoted to the field trip concerned subjects at the heart of the concerns of certain Geological Surveys: (a) traces of "European" geologies in Africa, (b) an ancient mining operation (Rome) and, (c) how to recognise traces of tsunamis (paleo tsunamis).

PART I : STRATEGY OF THE OAGS

WELCOME

The President, Dr. T Ramontja of South Africa, welcomed all present, indicating the programme's division into two parts, namely: The OAGS Strategy; and Administrative Issues relating to the organisation including the election of office bearers.

The President thanked the participants for their commitment to the organisation. He summarised the technical and administrative issues were addressed at the OAGS' launch three years previously as follows:

- **Compiling the constitution.** This constitution, which was adopted in 2008, is available on the organisation's website. It was noted that the website is functional and suggestions were invited on its improvement. It was further noted that a fully-devoted resource in the Secretariat may be advisable given the heavy workload.
- **Technical issues.** These include the OAGS' involvement in the following projects:
 - Coordinating African inputs in the Geological Map of the World;
 - Geological information for small scale mining – we will get a brief feedback on the status of this project;
 - The role of geological surveys in the development of Africa – a full presentation was given by Raw Materials in 2009. We need to discuss the way forward.

The President noted that while a few milestones have been achieved, there remains an enormous challenge in terms of communication between the Geological Surveys, and that all geological surveys should be mobilised to ensure their participation in the OAGS. He recommended that this form the core of the discussions of the business meeting.

It was noted that the biggest challenge is the relevance of the OAGS, which should exhibit real, visible benefit to its members. The meeting noted that programs developed should be relevant and the possibility of rotating leadership should be explored to address the issue of ownership and inclusivity. The President expressed his thanks to the delegates and members present and to the ANGCM and the Ministry of Energy for organising the meeting.

It was noted that the biggest challenge is the relevance of the OAGS, which should exhibit real, visible benefit to its members. The meeting noted that programs developed should be relevant and the possibility of rotating leadership should be explored to address the issue of ownership and inclusivity. The President expressed his thanks to the delegates and members present and to the ANGCM and the Ministry of Energy for organising the meeting.

Three presentations were delivered by the CGMW, EuroGeoSurveys and the Institute of Physics of the Globe.

2. STRATEGY OF THE OAGS

A draft document was presented for discussion and members' inputs were invited as summarised below:

The proposed mission, vision, values and objectives of the organisation were discussed. It was noted that a key challenge facing the OAGS is the recognition of geological surveys in African society, which should be apparent in the vision and mission statement. Following deliberations, the President suggested that the document be left as is and that a committee of 3 countries appointed to finalise the document. Members were invited to submit their views to the Secretariat or post comment on the website for refinement of the document.

It was suggested that the following points be included in the objectives.

1. Support to the activities of geological surveys, not only on a continental scale but also a regional scale.
2. Issue of partnerships to be included into the objectives.
3. Lobbying should be added to the objectives.
4. Cross country projects will enhance the visibility of different Geological surveys.
5. Recognition can also be achieved by printing a publication.

It was proposed that member contributions on the objectives focus on:

1. Strategy to mobilise members in order to strengthen the OAGS.
2. Discuss projects we want to kick start now.

Strategic actions

The meeting's discussions and proposals are summarised below:

Action plan:

- Responsible ministers should be identified in order for communication to occur at ministerial level for the identification and invitation of focal persons to attend the OAGS meeting.
- Two invitations could be issued: one of a political; and one of a technical nature.
- Regional bodies such as ECOWAS be part of the process of assisting the OAGS and that the support of the AU is also key - methods to integrate regional organisations into the OAGS and the related protocol were discussed.
- The EuroGeoSurveys recommended that the OAGS produce and distribute a document which demonstrates statistics on participating members.
- OAGS meetings could be held during or preceding ministerial meetings and a report, demonstrating the purpose, activities and benefits of the OAGS prepared for presentation at the Ministerial Forum.
- A delegation of the OAGS should discuss this matter with the AU and look at the logistics of how to present the activities of the OAGS to the Ministers.

- 'Membership' should imply commitment and a responsibility towards the Organisation - a financial contribution or subscription could be considered to demonstrate commitment to the OAGS.

Other suggestions:

- Make members aware of the benefits of the OAGS and encourage countries to become members of the OAGS - political coverage is essential for this.
- The production of products to entice membership by demonstrating the benefits of membership of the OAGS should be prioritised.
- Promote the activities of the OAGS through regional bodies – a geological databank will spark the interest of other countries.
- Identify themes which are relevant to geologists.
- Subscription fees should give members a right to vote and should exclude certain members from participation.
- In connection with the critical issue of membership fees – the finalisation of the strategy was left to the committee (Algeria, South Africa, New Guinea and Niger) to finalise the strategy first in view of the constitution and then decide on options or suggestions.
- The legal context should be considered – should the OAGS become a legal entity it has the right to oblige members to pay fees.
- Member states present should ensure that they bring one other member not present to the next meeting:

South Africa will bring Botswana
 Niger - Burkina Faso
 Mocambique - Zambia
 Mauritania - Mali
 New Guinea - Senegal
 Ghana - Nigeria
 Algeria - Northern Africa

It was decided that the annual meeting should persist in the three-day format to permit members to observe the practices of other geological surveys: the first day could be technical presentations; the second day devoted to field trips; and on the third day administrative issues could be discussed.

It was noted that the website of the OAGS is under-utilised and contains insufficient information, discussion points and technical documentation to assist the OAGS. It could be used to greater advantage as a vehicle to encourage the visibility of the activities of the OAGS. It was proposed that a more formal approach be established to get information on the activities of the various surveys on a more regular basis.

It was agreed that a link should be established between the OAGS and the EuroGeoSurveys in order to increase the visibility of the OAGS and a link on the website between the OAGS and the various geological surveys which constitute its members.

Resolution:

- The committee to finalise the strategy by November 2010.

Algeria, South Africa, New Guinea, Niger

3. PROGRAMMES OF THE OAGS

Algeria proposed that themes be identified to encourage interest in the OAGS, namely:

- Promotion of activities of the OAGS.
- Thematic geoscience maps with strong regional integration.

- African geosites and how to protect them.
- Publication of an OAGS Bulletin.
- Seismotectonic map and One Geology.
- Geo-hazards map.
- Remote sensing.
- Seamless Geological map for Africa.

PART II : ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS OF THE OAGS

1. ADMINISTRATION

Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda was adopted.

Adoption of the minutes at the last meeting (12/02/2009)

It was decided to adopt the minutes at the next meeting owing to the existing of conflicting versions of the document.

2. PRESENTATIONS ON PROJECTS

Presentations and/or discussions of the following projects were held:

1. Role of Geological Surveys in Africa's development
2. The Role of Geological Surveys in Small-Scale mining.
3. One Geology
4. Atlas of African Geosites

3. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

In terms of the Statutes we need to appoint a President, two Vice Presidents, a Secretariat and Regional Representatives, whose terms will be as per statute. The following votes were taken and agreed:

The President: Algeria
 The Secretariat: South Africa
 Vice President 1: Namibia
 Vice President 2: Ghana

Regional Representatives:

SADC: Mozambique
 North Africa: Mauritania
 Central Africa: No representative
 East Africa: Sudan
 West Africa: New Guinea

4. FORMAT OF THE NEXT MEETING

Namibia volunteered to host the meeting pending approval from the relevant principals. Mozambique also indicated its willingness to host the OAGS pending confirmation.

5. CLOSURE

The President thanked the participants for their support and expressed his confidence in the decisions taken and leadership agreed upon. He thanked the people of Algeria for their contributions and the high standard set in hosting the meeting.