

Under the High patronage
of His Excellency
the President of the Tunisian Republic
Mr Zine El Abidine Ben Ali

The Tunisian Geographers Association
organizes
in collaboration with
the International Geographical Union

**The 31st International
Geographical Congress**



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Honour Committee

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The Minister of the Scientific Research, of Technology
and Competences Development

The Minister of Foreign Affairs

The Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development

The Minister of Tourism

The Minister of Equipment, Housing and Land Planning

The General Secretary of the Arab League Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Organizing Committee

Président : Adnane Hayder

Vice-présidents : Abid Bachraoui, Abdelkrim Daoud, Amor Mokhtar Gammar,
Latifa Hénia

Secretary General : Ali Toumi

Treasurer : Abdelhamid Ben Ghazi

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Head of Specific Committees

Scientific Programme : Latifa Hénia,

Fieldtrips: Abdelhakim Abichou

Geography Olympiads : Zouhaier Helaoui

Material Organisation : Abid Bachraoui

Sponsoring: Abdelhamid Ben Ghazi

Welcoming Message

Dear Friends

The Tunisian Association of Geographers has the great honour to announce that it organizes, in collaboration with The International Geographic Union, the 31st International Convention of Geography. Being of the highest importance for the international community of geographers, this event will enable geographers all over the world to present the results of their researches and to confront their ideas. It will also be an opportunity to debate about current issues which show the place of geography in knowledge production and its contribution to the improvement of humans' life conditions and their environment. That is why, we also have the immense pleasure to invite you to take part in the activities of this event which, we hope, will mark a milestone in the U.G.I history.

Since its election in August 2000 by the international community of geographers and the credit they hence made to it, the Tunisian Geographers Association has buckled down in collaboration with The Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Technology and The Development Of Competences as well as the support of several other departments, to prepare all the necessary conditions to guarantee to this event all the success it deserves and for which you will without any doubt, contribute to give concrete expression to.

Placed under the patronage of his Excellency the President of the Tunisian Republic and benefiting from the membership of numerous academic institutions of research as well as the support of several other national friendly organisms, the 2008 Tunis Congress constitutes a precious opportunity for the international community of geographers to further broaden.

Dear Friends

Aware of the importance of the event, the Tunisian geographers have spared no effort to guarantee all the conditions of success. We insist on reminding you that this congress is in fact yours. Its success will also depend on your participation. Thus, we expect you to be numerous, from all continents and of all specializations. Your friends and your attendants will also be welcome.

We are looking forward to seeing you soon among us.

For The I.G.U 31st Congress Organizing Committee

The President
Adnane Hayder



The Scientific Programme

The Tunis Convention will constitute, let's hope so, an additional link in the collective building by geographers of their discipline and one more step in the commitment of I.G.U on the way of enriching sciences at the international level.

In fact, after the Washington Congress in 1992 which had had as a theme « Geography is the Discovery » and after La Hague's Congress in 1996, in which the general thematic was « The Earth, The Sea and Human Effort » and the Seoul Congress which had selected as a theme « Living with Diversity » or the Glasgow Congress in 2004 which integrated this diversity in the service of one land « One earth, many Worlds», the Tunis Congress intends to extend this commitment by adopting the theme of Collective Territorial Building .

This continuity between I.G.U Congress comes with a clearer commitment to knowledge and action. «Building Together our Territories» which is the theme of the I.G.U 31st Congress holds more than one message but invites to commit oneself deeply on the way of reflexion and common actions.

A. General Theme

Building Together our Territories!

The « territories » refer to the overall geographic levels (ranging from the local to the global, and going through the regional, national and the supranational levels) which serve as a life framework, reference and human action. The territory constitutes, in its broad meaning, the privileged field of our discipline: it provides it with its unity and status. Dealing with the territory means also taking into consideration the relation between society and its environment and focusing on the contribution of geography and the specificity of geography. Choosing the territory as a field of study and eared to building and structuring is a major stake.



It is true that the territory is made progressively before and with us; but the territory is first of all a continuous structure. It is built and presents itself as the result of a long historical process. The territory has always to be rebuilt in the sense of an increased mastery and a more efficient and viable spatial organisation for the future generations. While territories are present stakes, they are above all for the future.

This structure is more and more a collective task, the world has become a common village; and we talk more and more of the place world thanks to the new communication and information technologies on one hand (NCIT) and the growing globalisation on the other. An actor, whatever his weight and legitimacy, can no longer build and organise the territory on his own, he does it in community.

This collective structure concerns both the internal and the exterior actors. The present world is a world where everybody's life is more and more conditioned by the actions of others, where the governance issue must be considered at the local, national and even the world scale and where complex issues and the recent unsettling are increasingly growing.

Being the federative theme of the Tunis Convention, the territorial structuring will focus on the operational dimension of geography. By encouraging geographers at going beyond the sole analysis of the territory, geography has the ambition of acting and taking part in the structuring or rather the restructuring of the said territory.

Nowadays, the world is going through a critical period, a period of changes in which the problems of sustainable development, governing and solidarity (local, urban, national and even international) are more and more coming up, leading in their wake to problems related to the others' interference in the territory. At the same time, the increasing globalisation, the opening of the frontiers, the development of new communication technologies shed the light in new terms on the issues of territorial organisation, the multiplicity of territories, the question of limits and the territorial impact of human actions. Nowadays, humans can not carry on ignoring each other, whatever their nature and their weight in



the organisation of spaces and the structuring of territories. Territories are first built with those who live in them, but also with the others, those who are outside and whose existence, influence and even action we can no longer ignor. More than ever and whatever is the country's status (a great power or a small country, an industrialised or a developing country, rich or poor countries), taking into consideration the other, the difficulties and the constraints he faces, as well as his capabilities and competences must be considered. The experienced, imagined or built world can no longer be conceived without the other.

Humans are more and more led to live in conjunction with each other in several territories at the same time, territories which are fit into each other according to circumstances, occupations, means and stakes. That's why, the plural should be privileged: « Our territories » rather than the singular. The people's increased mobility as well as that of goods, ideas and information contributes considerably in consolidating, unifying, reconstructing or disrupting, rebuilding and deconstructing territories.

Geography is also a territory. It is a question of re-building this disciplinary territory. The geographic knowledge has to be delimited in comparison with territories of other disciplines. Therefore, the contribution and the specificity of geography in the knowledge and human action fields will be emphasized.

B. Parallel Theme

Evolution of the Geographic Thought

The Congress Scientific Committee invites the community of geographers to think again about the evolution of the geographic thought through the centuries. This thematic aims at emphasising the different contributions of cultures in the progressive setting of a know how which is today more and more central among social sciences.



C. Themes of the Technical Sessions

Participants to the 31st International Congress of Geography (Tunis 2008) are invited to present 15 minutes oral communications (or posters) dealing with an issue related to the following themes or geographic branches :

A. Physical Geography

1. Biodiversity and Environmental equilibrium
2. Geography of arid lands
3. Biogeographical diversity
4. Coastal morphology
5. Climatological matters
6. Geography of cold regions
7. Mountainous systems
8. Natural Risks
9. Reliefs and Karstics contours

B. Human Interventions in weakened environment

10. Town and land planning
11. Local and regional development
12. Rural areas transformation
13. Mobilization and uses of water
14. Populating dynamics
15. Highlightings improvement of the coastlines
16. Risks and agressions on the coastal areas
17. Mountain and human activities
18. The desertification and human responses

C. Economic geography

19. New economic process in the globalizing era
20. Geography of transport
21. Geography of ports
22. Geography of Tourism



23. Industrial spaces
24. Geography of fishing
25. Geography of commerce

D. Urban spaces

26. Sustainability of small and medium towns
27. Metropolization
28. Town management and development
29. The town, a place of living

E. The world-space

30. The large political changes of the present world
31. Sociocultural and special process all over the world
32. Geography of the large geopolitical spaces
33. Outskirts and marginalized spaces
34. Geography of emerging countries
35. Responses to underdevelopment
36. Geographical views over globalization

F. Concepts, tools and geographical techniques

37. Making maps of today's world
38. New technologies in Geography
39. Geography and modelling
40. ICT and geography
41. Techniques and representation tools of the geographical space
42. Conceptualizing in Geography
43. Epistemology of Geography
44. Speeches and geographical languages
45. Didactic of Geography
46. The geography in networks
47. Distribution and geographical concentrations
48. Geography and teaching
49. Geographical landscapes
50. Geography and humanism



G. Other geographies

51. Applied geography
52. Cultural geography
53. Psychogeography
54. Geography of health
55. Social geography
56. Population matters
57. Political Geography

H. Particular spaces

58. The Mediterranean
59. The Sahara
60. The Africas
61. Geographical Diversity of the Arab countries

D. Themes of the Special Sessions

Tunis 2008 Congress will devote a particular interest to the special themes for which a reflection has been engaged inside special actions initiated by the I.G.U or by other partners.

Publications

The National Organizing Committee of the 2008 Tunis Congress as well as the Association of Tunisian Geographers have offered to prepare especially for this event, publications and computer media in French, English and Arabic for the participants and their attendants.

Congress venue

In collaboration with the I.G.U Executive Committee, the Congress Organisation Committee has selected the Kram Exhibition Centre as a reception site of the 2008 Tunis Congress. Situated at only nearly 10



kilometers from the centre of town and enjoying a good accessibility, the Kram Exhibition Centre offers also thanks to its 25.000 m² covered area, the opportunity of being able to receive the whole of the components of the Congress as well as the exhibition fair.

Fieldtrips and excursions

Several Study trips both in Tunisia and abroad are offered to the participants and their attendants. Those related to Tunisia have the advantage of illustrating the extreme variety of the geographic Tunisian landscape and the multiple forms of the human intervention in the country. The trips abroad have as an objective to establish a parallel between some Mediterranean countries

A. Fieldtrips in Tunisia

A.1. Half day excursion

- 1. Tunis, town centre sceneries
- 2. Tunis Medina : Culture and Society
- 3. Laks and Sebkhass of Tunis
- 4. The ports of Tunis
- 5. Carthage legacy

A2.Day excursions

- 6. The large Tunis
- 7. The Cap Bon, some aspects of the physical geography
- 8. Bizerte and Ichkeul Lakes
- 9. The Medjerda low Valley
- 10. Bizerte and its region
- 11. Sousse and Kairouan
- 12. Zaghouan mountain

A3.Two days excursions

- 13. The Cap Bon
- 14. Across olive tree countries: landscapes and economy



- 15. Tunisian Dorsal : natural landscapes
- 16. North-West of Tunisia, forest and agrarian landscapes
- 17. The Sahel: urban sceneries and economic and spatial dynamics

A4.Three-days or more excursions

- 18. Humid areas in Tunisia: Lakes and Sebkhass (3 days)
- 19. The Tunisian South-East: Djerba and Zarzis (4 days)
- 20. Geomorphology of the Eastern Tunisia coastline. The Archipelago of Kerkena, Central Sahel and the Cap Bon(4 days).
- 21. Oasis and desert in Tunisia (5 days)
- 22. Eastern Tunisia (5 days)

B. Excursions abroad

B1.The Nile Delta (7 days)

B2.Trip across Morocco (7 days)

The final list of the selected trips will be made up according to the choice of the participants who will have sent their participation forms to the Organizing Committee before January 2008.

Entertaining Programme

Participants to the Congress will have the opportunity if they are willing, to part in the welcoming and farewell dinners. A gala evening is also expected.

Scholarships

The organisation Committee and its partners offer to the young geographers of the developing countries, on file presentation, scholarships which partially cover the registration and accommodation fees during the Congress.



Geography Olympiads

The Geography Olympiads will take place during the week preceding the convention. They will enable to a group of young budding geographers from different countries to discover the variety of Tunisian landscapes and to put into practice their talent as regards knowledge and geographic know how.

Exhibition-Fair

The 2008 Tunis Congress will devote a huge space aimed at receiving the exhibitors of all kinds of geography-related products. Publishing or new technologies professionals are all invited to take part. The National Committees of Geography are also keenly invited in order to occupy a prominent place. They will enjoy a privileged pricing.

General Information

1. Tunis

The town of Tunis has today one million inhabitants in its municipal area, the large Tunis is quite the double. Although it is a one-million town, it remains nevertheless a town with a human dimension. It is also a modern town which enjoys all the attributes of modernity in architecture, highway maintenance, infrastructures and services. Hotels, restaurants, banks, galleries, administrations and shopping centres compete there in attractiveness. Tunis is also gifted with a wonderful, well maintained and attractive Medina which is considered as one of its major components at both its morphological level and its socio-economic landscape. No one but the geographer can appreciate its significance and its position in the Tunis environment.

2. Accommodation

The town of Tunis has numerous hotels of different categories and with which the organisation Committee has advantageously negotiated the



pricing, in a way that the maximum of geographers can take part in the Congress at fair fees. You will find the best services and facilities. You can pay cash (Tunisian Dinars, Euros, or US Dollars) or by credit card. We have selected for you the best hotels and we have booked allotments for the Congress. However, don't forget that reservations must be done months in advance. Therefore we advise you to show your interest as soon as possible after reading this first information circular of the Congress.

3. Transport

The Congress sites are situated at nearly 10 kilometers far from the centre of town and the hotels selected for you. The taxi is the fastest and the most practical means for your trips as it is also at a fair pricing. Taxis accept three people at maximum and the cost of the trip is displayed on a counter. Only the passengers coming from or going to the airport have to pay a cheap extra fee for the big luggage. Furthermore, there will be a bus service to the Congress site, at the beginning and at the end of the day, at a very cheap price.

Social Programme

The Organizing Committee of the 2008 Tunis Congress offers to the attendants of the Congress delegates cultural trips in Tunis itself, in the Grand Tunis as well as in the North East of the country. They will also be offered play activities or shows. The social programme will be definitively made up according to the intent participation forms which will be received by the Committee of Organisation.

I.G.U Commissions and Taskforces

The participation proposals to the proceedings of the 31st International Congress of Geography can be planned either in the technical sessions or the sections planned during the Congress, for the I.G.U commissions or Taskforces. A list of the latter can be consulted on the I.G.U web site.



Intent of Participation Form

Dear Colleague

We are certain that you are going to contribute to the success of the I.G.U 31st Convention and that you will do your best to facilitate the task of the Committee of Organisation. That's why we kindly ask you to fill the enclosed form and to send it back to the following electronic mail address (The General Secretary of Tunis 2008 Congress : Ali.Toumi@fshst.rnu.tn) to inform us about your intention of participation. The said form does not bind you definitively; its aim is to enable the Organizing Committee to constitute a listing of the potential participants. Nevertheless, the fact of filling the said form will guarantee the ulterior reception of any mail related to the Congress. In due time, we will ask you to confirm your intention of participation.

We will be grateful if you could transmit the intention of participation form to other geographers of your country.

Thank You

See you soon in Tunisia

Best Regards from the Organising Committee



The Kram Exhibition Center

