

## Presidential Address: Balkan Geophysical Society into the new century

Petar Y. Stavrev

President of the Balkan Geophysical Society

This year the Balkan Geophysical Society (BGS) steps in its seventh year of existence. Founded in 1993, BGS is a relatively young organization of the Geophysical Societies of Balkan Countries. BGS was conceived in 1991 during talks between the Presidents of the Bulgarian Geophysical Society, Prof. Dimcho Yossifov, and the Hellenic Geophysical Union, Dr. George Sideris. The new regional Society proved its usefulness and vitality as early as its First Congress in Athens in 1996. The first President of BGS, Dr. George Sideris, and the Hellenic Geophysical Union played a particularly significant role in laying down the BGS foundations. Important new developments came into being during the past three years under the presidency of Prof. Ahmet Basokur and the Chamber of Geophysical Engineers of Turkey (CGET). They contributed to the formation of the BGS web site and the issuing of the first volumes of the on-line "Journal of the Balkan Geophysical Society" in cooperation with the Editor, Dr. Gregory Tsokas, and the Owner of the printed versions of the Journal, Mr. Osman Demirag, President of CGET. The Second Congress of BGS in Istanbul, July 1999, was a successfully organized geophysical event. Outstanding companies were attracted as corporate members of BGS. On behalf of the BGS members I express our gratitude to all colleagues and Societies that have contributed to the progress of BGS.

The Bulgarian Geophysical Society takes over the next 2000-2002 mandate of BGS presidency with the intention of preserving the achievements and furthering the developments. BGS aims to create conditions for an effective collaboration among geophysicists and to promote an extended application of Geophysics in the economic and cultural life of the Balkan Countries, thus strengthening its prestige as a science and practice. The ideas about a further progress in the BGS's activity proceed from the Constitution and the latest decisions of the Council of BGS.

First it is necessary to implement a project for the construction of a BGS information system. This

system will include the exchange of professional information supplied by universities, institutes, laboratories, and firms where Geophysics is being studied and developed. In addition, information will be gathered from the various organizations interested in the application of geophysical investigations in geology, oil industry, mining, hydrogeology, ecology, archaeology, and civil construction. According to preference, personal and professional data on the geophysicists involved in BGS's activities may be included for circulation through the system. On the whole, the introduction of this system will contribute to a better mutual awareness of the geophysicists and geophysical organizations in the Balkan Countries, and will promote cooperation in the main directions - science, practice, and business.

The foundation of a regional organization like the BGS preconditions the integration of potential for geophysical studies of objects of common interest. Especially attractive in this respect are the possibilities for the study of large geostructures throughout the Balkans, overcoming bureaucratic transborder restrictions. Proposals have already been put forward for the collaborative investigations of the Moesian Platform, the Strandzha, Rhodope and Osogovo mountains, the Black Sea shelf, among others, as well as for the preparation of geophysical maps of the Balkans. Unfortunately, we cannot be satisfied with the progress in this direction. Nevertheless, existing ideas and projects must remain on the BGS's agenda. A good way to follow up on these initiatives is to organize workshops on topics of mutual interest for professionals from scientific institutes, universities, mining and oil companies.

The BGS may also play a significant part in the promotion of collaboration in the field of geophysical education throughout the region. Our international organization can assist in the exchange of professional experience in training undergraduate and postgraduate students, in designing curricula and new courses, in co-authoring of textbooks, exchanging lecturers, etc. These issues in more detail will be

discussed and I hope put into practice by the new Executive Committee of the BGS.

The organizational activity of the new Executive Committee will be geared at strengthening the bonds between the BGS members and attracting new full and associated members from the Balkans and neighboring regions, as well as new corporate members. A priority in these activities will be also given to the proliferation of the international relations between the BGS and the European Association of Geoscientists and Engineers (EAGE), the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG), and the EurAsian Geophysical Society (EAGO). BGS will continue to work in the spirit of promoting peace and friendship

among our peoples, and mutual respect among the Balkan Countries.

In the wake of the new century and the new millennium, Geophysics faces challenges arising from the necessity of further technological advancements, widening the scope of its applications, and stabilizing the investments. BGS's growing activity aims at helping the Balkan geophysical community to meet these challenges. Only the effective collaboration between all national member Societies of the BGS and their contribution to this expanding activity will guarantee the fulfillment of the high-minded objectives written down in its Constitution.