

## Message from the Under-Secretary of State, Chief National Geologist



As the Chief National Geologist in the Ministry of the Environment as well as a hydrogeologist and a member of the IAH, I am very proud and gratified that the XXXVIII IAH Congress on Groundwater Quality Sustainability is being organised by the Polish IAH NC and held in Cracow. I treat it as an expression of respect for the Polish hydrogeological community. This is an excellent opportunity for us to present our national achievements in the field of hydrogeology.

Poland, as a country in which most of the water used in industry and for human consumption is abstracted from groundwater, treats hydrogeological issues seriously. We have an excellent understanding of national groundwater resources, which for many years now have been successively documented on regional scales. A great success for Polish hydrogeology is the completion of the numerous sheets of the hydrogeological map of Poland in the scale of 1 : 50 000, which covers the entire country. This map, as a digital database, now constitutes an important source of information regarding the geology and hydrogeological conditions of Poland. We have modern and innovative legal regulations, especially the Water Act, which sanctions the existence of the Polish Hydrogeological Survey. Its duties include identification of national groundwater resources, assessing water balances and defining their protection zones with a view to ensuring their rational use by society and public utilities, industry, and agriculture.

Innovative methods of hydrogeological assessments and the high level of education in numerous academic centres that train professional hydrogeologists ensure the continuous development of Polish hydrogeology.

I deeply hope that the Congress will be a great opportunity to present these achievements. Some of them, such as, for example, the Polish hydrogeological cartographic system or recognition of protection areas for groundwater recharge zones or even the functioning of the Polish Hydrogeological Survey may be considered for implementation in other countries. We are willing to cooperate.

The Polish hydrogeological speciality is the identification of mining, therapeutic and thermal waters. We are a country that is naturally rich in these waters and they are the subject of much interest presented by multiple investors. Poland is, generally, as a country, open to cooperation.

I hope that the participants of the Cracow Congress, apart from taking part in the congress' sessions and informal discussions, will also find some time for discovering our country. A country of success, success achieved since the political transformations of 1989. A country in which one can do business, study, go sightseeing or explore nature and spend one's free time (not only drinking groundwater).

I encourage the participants, then, to use this opportunity. Please, do explore Cracow and other attractions of our country; come here to do business or on holiday with your families. You are most welcome to Poland.

*Henryk Jacek Jezierski*

## From the President of IAH



In my capacity as the President of the International Association of Hydrogeologists, I am taking the opportunity created by the XXXVIII IAH World Congress held in Cracow, the ancient capital of Poland, to address all individuals, institutions and organizations actively working in the broad arena of hydrology and hydrogeology.

The fact that the present IAH Congress is being held in the country, where the Solidarity movement, followed by the peaceful revolution headed by Lech Walesa, were born, encourages me to appeal from this place to the sister organizations and professional associations dealing with water resources, to join forces and work together on the monumental task of supplying good quality water to a more and more thirsty world. In particular, I am thinking about groundwater resources, which are the Nature's gift for us and which need to be investigated, managed and also protected for future generations.

I am convinced that only well-coordinated, joint action on the basis of scientific findings of groundwater professionals will lead to a more efficient assessment and management of groundwater, and this will assure the adequate quality and sustainability of this precious resource. I therefore hope that this Congress will greatly contribute to improve groundwater governance on local, national, regional, continental and global level, with a multitude of interesting scientific results, interesting applications and clever solutions.

I would like to thank the Polish friends of IAH who have undertaken the successful organization of this important international event. I extend my thanks to the Polish Government and AGH University of Science and Technology for their generous support for the XXXVIII IAH 2010 World Congress, and I am sure that the famous Polish hospitality will create a very positive environment for our deliberations and improve the spirit of cooperation for safeguarding and improving groundwater quality.

*Willi Struckmeier*