Dr. Wissam S. Al-Hashimi

IUGS Vice President

Dr. Wissam S. Al-Hashimi, born in Baghdad, Iraq, received his B.Sc. degree in geology-physics from the Geological Department at Baghdad University in 1965. After completing the national military service, he joined Mosul University in North Iraq in January 1967 where he worked as a demonstrator in the newly established geological department. In 1968, he left Iraq to England to do post-graduate research under the supervision of Late Professor J. E. Hemingway. He worked on the sedimentology & dolomitization of the limestone member of the Carboniferous Middle Limestone Group of Northumberland, northeast England. While carrying out his post-graduate work, Al-Hashimi attended M. Sc. courses in mineral chemistry, metallurgy and statistics. During his work on limestones outcrops in the intertidal zone of the North Sea, he discovered two related recent geological phenomena: Recent dedolomitization (JSP vol. 43, 1973) and Recent carbonate cementation within dolostone beds (JSP vol. 47, 1977).

While a post-graduate student he also published a paper on dolomitization porosity using scanning electron microscopy (York Geol. Soc. Proc. vol. 38, 1972). After obtaining his Ph.D. on 12 February 1972, Al-Hashimi drove from Newcastle to Baghdad to become the head of the Mineralogy & Petrology Division at the newly established D.G. of Geological Surveying & Mineral Investigation (currently Geological Surveying & Mining Co.). He worked in the Survey from 1972 to 1981, during which he succeeded in building up an up-to-date petrology, mineralogy and sedimentology division. With the help of some Czech & Hungarian Geologists, Dr. Al-Hashimi managed to train young Iraqi geologists working in his division on sedimentology, metamorphic and igneous petrology, mineralogy and ore microscopy, clay mineralogy and heavy mineral analysis. During his work in the Survey, Al-Hashimi realised that the nature of his responsibilities demanded a broader geological background and a wide knowledge in various aspects of the geology of Iraq, and thus he devoted considerable part of his time doing field work in conjunction with the ongoing geological and mineral surveying project of Iraq at that time. During the execution of this project Al-Hashimi dealt with hard as well as soft rocks ranging in age from the Paleozoic to Quaternary. He also dealt with mineral deposits, namely Mesozoic sedimentary iron ore, Tertiary bentonite and lead-zinc mineralization. His work in the Survey culminated in a comprehensive compilation and synthesis of the sedimentary geology of Iraq (unpublished report).

The geological career of Dr. Al-Hashimi took a new turn when he was selected to head the newly established underground storage team within the Iraq National Oil Company (Oil Exploration Co.). He became in charge of the engineering geological investigation of the Iraqi territory for the purpose of locating favourable sites for U. G. storage of liquid and gaseous hydrocarbon products in salt, rock caverns and in porous formations. By 1990, prior to the Gulf War, Al-Hashimi concluded successfully his project. After the Nato Campaign against Iraq in 1991, he was appointed a project manager for the unconventional storage of petroleum products in the Ministry of Oil reporting directly to the Oil Minister. The project lasted 3 years, during which Al-Hashimi succeeded in developing a new concept in unconventional storage. In 1994, he returned to the Oil Exploration Co. to head the Sedimentology Division where he supervised many sedimentological studies. Currently Al-Hashimi is a consulting geol-

ogist in the office of the Director General of Exploration and a board member of the Iraqi Drilling Co.

As a geoscientist, Dr. Al-Hashimi has been active on national, regional and international levels. In 1973–1974, he served as Secretary General of the Geological Society of Iraq. Following the establishment of the Arab Geologists Association (AGA) in 1975, Dr. Al-Hashimi was appointed as a head of the association's advisory committee. He continued this post until January 1993 when he was elected by AGA Council as Secretary General and was re-elected for a second term in May 1998. In February 2001 he was elected President of the Geological Society of Iraq. His positions in the Association enabled him to be involved in the organization of many conferences, symposia and seminars. The most notably were four conferences on geology of the Middle East, two seminars on underground storage of oil and gas, two seismological seminars, two international conferences on Quaternary sediments of the Arabian Gulf, two symposia on geological correlation between Arab countries, and many other scientific activities. Dr. Al-Hashimi is also editor-in-chief of the Association's bilingual geoscience magazine *Geoscience & Arab Development*. On international level, Dr. Al-Hashimi was elected as a council member of the International Association of Sedimentologists where he served for two consecutive terms (1982–1990). During the 11th International Sedimentological Congress (Hamilton, Canada, 1982), jointly with B. Pursur and L. Land, he organised a symposium on Dolomitization & Dedolomitization. In 1986, he participated in a workshop organised by R. Ginsburg (Fisher Island, Miami), dedicated to the formulation of the Global Sedimentary Geology Programme. In 1996, he was elected as a Vice President of IUGS. Al-Hashimi was the convenor of the 31st IGC Rio-2000 Session on Petroleum Geology & Reservoir Analysis. He is currently a member of the Advisory Board of the 32nd IGC (Florence-2004).

Dr. Al-Hashimi is the author of a large number of scientific papers (in Arabic & English languages) published in local, Arab and international journals, which cover a wide range of subjects, namely, carbonate, evaporite sedimentology & diagenesis, petrology, mineralogy, geoarchaeology, engineering geology, underground storage, industrial rocks and minerals, and M.E. waters. Dr. Al-Hashimi is also the author of many unpublished studies and reports at the Geological Survey & the Oil Exploration Co. He is also the editor/co-editor of four publications. Al-Hashimi is also a regular contributor of analytical articles to local newspapers in Baghdad on various political, oil and water issues in the Middle East and the Arab world.

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