

GLOBAL STONE CONGRESS RETURNS TO BRAZIL IN 2018

Geólogo Cid Chiodi Filho - ABIROCHAS Consultant

cidchiodi@abirochas.com.br

Engineers Carlos César Peiter (cpeiter@cetem.gov.br), Francisco Wilson Hollanda Vidal (fhollanda@cetem.gov.br) and Núria Fernández Castro (ncaastro@cetem.gov.br), technologists from the Mineral Technology Center – CETEM / Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communications – MCTI

With a little more than ten years of existence, the Global Stone Congress (GSC) has witnessed significant changes in the dimension stone industry, following expressive growth in worldwide production and international trade, as well as the dislocation of mining and industrial activities outside of Europe. China, India, Turkey and Brazil have emerged and consolidated themselves as new players in the dimension stone industry. Important technological advances have resulted in productivity jumps in quarrying and beneficiation activities, allowing a wide variety of new geological materials to be introduced in the international market.

Constraints connected to sustainability have increasingly permeated mining-industrial production chains, such as the stone industry chain. The sustainable development outlook cannot be reduced to a mere proposition of specific, localized actions to compensate the so-called environmental liabilities generated by quarrying and beneficiation activities of the raw materials. From now on, covering materials need to be studied under the guise of the circular economy, which is based on a more ample concept that sustainability in itself.

Mainly on the international plane, the new regulations of the market focus on qualitative production aspects, including adequate environmental conduct, fair trade rules and social responsibility, in this case covering the communities involved in a wider perspective of relationship. In fact, this is one dimension that has become obligatory in the movement to globalize markets, which results in the transposition of laws, standards and norms, increasingly strict for producing countries.

History of the GSC

The first GSC, when it was still called the “International Congress on Dimension Stones” (ICDS) was held in Brazil in 2005. The event resulted in a partnership between the Mineral Technology Center (CETEM), connected to the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communications (MCTIC) and the Marble and Granite Technology Center (CETEMAG), with support of ABIROCHAS and other institutions affiliated to the Brazilian Dimensions Stone Technology and Quality Network (RETEQ-ROCHAS).

Other editions of the event were subsequently held in Italy (2008), Spain (2010), Portugal (2012) and Turkey (2014), adopting the formal name Global Stone Congress as of Spain. The upcoming GSC event will return to Brazil, also organized by CETEM and ABIROCHAS, April 26-29, 2018 in Ilheus, state of Bahia.

Brazil 2005

The idea for the “First International Congress on Dimension Stones” (ICDS) came from Brazil in 2003 and was developed in partnership with CETEMAG and CETEM/MCTIC, between 2003 and 2005, with the support of ABIROCHAS and the research institutions, members of RETEQ-ROCHAS. The Congress was held in the SESC facilities (Commerce Social Services) in Guarapari, ES, February 20-23, 2005, partially coinciding with the Vitória Marble and Granite Fair so as to have greater business participation.

Around 500 people took part in the opening and 300 more during the Congress. Presentations of 93 technical papers were made during the event and eight lectures made by internationally acclaimed experts. Also, three round tables were held, with participation of government agencies, research institutions and business representatives, which generated excellent discussions about the market, use and application of stones and sustainable development. The Congress gathered specialists from Brazil, Italy, Spain, United States, Israel, Portugal and Germany.

The annals of the event were published in the CD ROM **I Congresso Internacional de Rochas Ornamentais**. Rio de Janeiro: CETEM/MCT, 2005 and are available on the CETEM website.

Italy 2008

Three years later and with effective participation of ABIROCHAS and CETEM in organizing the event, the II International Dimension Stone Congress was held by the Internazionale Marmi e Macchine (IMM) and the Università degli Studi di Siena - Centro di Geotecnologie, in Carrara, Italy, May 29-31, 2008.

Considered by the international media as the most important scientific event in the industry, it had the participation of around 150 professionals, researchers and technologists from Italy, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Croatia, Turkey, Slovenia, Slovakia, Columbia, USA, Brazil and Iran. Tens of themes were discussed of a technological and geological nature, as well as discussion of the outlook for the industry, production problems of dimension stones, environmental impact and global trade.

The Congress, entitled “Dimension Stones: XXI Century Challenges”, was held simultaneously with the 29th International Carrara Marble Fair – Carrara Marmotec, a traditional fair in the industry, which in that year was visited by almost 20,000 professionals, 14% of which were Brazilians. In fact, the massive turnout by Brazil was due to the efforts of ABIROCHAS, which, besides organizing the II International Congress, established a protocol of understanding with the Ministry of Mining and Energy by means of its Geology, Mining and Mineral Transformation Secretariat (SGM), of the National Department of Mineral Production (DNPM) and the Brazilian Geological Survey (CPRM) and its six producing states, with the objective of expanding the Brazilian participation in the Carrara Fair.

The government delegation, which also took part in the Congress’ opening, together with Daneluzzi Azeredo, former President of ABIROCHAS, was composed by the Assistant Secretary

of SGM, Carlos Nogueira Junior, The Director-President of SGB/CPRM, Agamenon Dantas and Ivan Sérgio de Cavalcante Mello, Manager of the Mineral and Industrial Stones Division; by Director General of the DNPM, Miguel Antônio Cedraz Nery, and by Paulo Ribeiro de Santana, Assistant Director. The group was accompanied by the Director-President of the Brazilian Mining Institute (IBRAM), Paulo Camillo Vargas Penna and delegations from the six producing states: Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Piauí, Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo and Rio de Janeiro. In the scientific community, Brazil was represented by researchers Carlos César Peiter and Núria Castro (CETEM), Maria Heloísa Barros de Oliveira Frascá (IPT) and Eleno de Paula Rodrigues (SENAI-SP).

Dr. Paola Blasi, then connected to the IMM Carrara, was central to organizing the event and in publishing the annals from it.

The annals of the event were published in the book **Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Dimension Stones**, 2008, Carrara. Dimension Stones ICDS: XXI Century Challenges. Pisa, Pacini Editore, 2008.

Spain 2010

The third international congress, exclusively organized and sponsored by the Instituto Tecnológico de la Construcción (AIDICO), from the Valencia, Spain community, changed the name to its present one, Global Stone, in order to be more comprehensive and avoid terminology problems between diverse languages. AIDICO possesses several accredited laboratories and expertise in construction materials, including natural or dimension stone in the autonomous region of Valencia.

The event occurred in the city of Alicante, March 2-5, 2010, with around 100 participants. Five theme sessions and 59 papers were presented, distributed in the following areas: exploration and exploitation (7 papers), elaboration and processing (19), environment (10), natural stone in architecture (11) and characterization of new products (12). Also, there were five assembly conferences opening each of the technical sessions.

For Brazil, the following participated in the event: Carlos C. Peiter from CETEM, Maria Heloísa Barros de Oliveira Frascá and Fabiano Cabañas, from Instituto de Pesquisas Tecnológicas (IPT).

The annals of the event were only distributed in digital media; however, the papers can be requested from AIDICO and CETEM, which also has copies for distribution.

Portugal 2012

The fourth Global Stone Congress, entitled **“Towards Innovation”** ended on July 20 at CEVALOR, Borba, district of Évora, after five days that gathered the main players in the natural stone world, coming from tens of countries, such as Germany, Australia, Brazil, Croatia, Egypt, Slovenia, Spain, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, Romania, Turkey and Portugal.

With around 200 participants, professionals and industry experts, the congress occurred July 16-20 in an itinerant fashion in the “concelhos” of the Marble Zone, Estremoz and Vila Viçosa

and was organized by the Associação Valor Pedra, with collaboration of several entities, companies and government agencies, highlighting the scientific organization of the Instituto Superior Técnico, the University of Évora and the University Nova of Lisbon. The organization was excellent, in spite of the logistical challenges of making an itinerant event.

With regard to scientific merit, it should be mentioned that several excellent papers were presented, focused on technological development of production and processing of dimension stones; new materials, equipment and technology, which clearly shows the progress of the industry. Other interesting work presented were research on geology, sustainable development, conservation of stone property and quality and durability of final products.

ABIROCHAS, represented at the event by its president, Reinaldo Sampaio Dantas and by Geologist Cid Chiodi Filho, and CETEM, with researchers Carlos C. Peiter and Núria F. Castro, who were part of the Organizing Committee and Antônio Gilberto Costa (UFMG), Francisco W. H. Vidal (CETEM) and Maria Heloísa B. de O. Frascá (IPT) on the scientific consulting committee. In total, more than 20 Brazilians took part in the Congress.

In keeping with the technical sessions, the Congress integrated cultural activities and set aside a day for technical visits to other parts of the country. The opening session was presided by Prime Minister, Pedro Passos Coelho, who came to Borba accompanied by his Minister of Economy and Employment, Álvaro Santos Pereira.

The Annals of the event, in English, were distributed by digital media and selected works were published in the digital magazine Key Engineering Materials.

Turkey 2014

The historic partnership between ABIROCHAS and CETEM was repeated in 2014, collaborating for Brazilian presence in the V Globa Stone Congress, held in Antalya, Turkey, October 22-25, 2014.

The Congress' organization was up to institutions in the host country through the Geological Engineering Chamber, the Mining Engineering Chamber and the Dimension Stone and Machinery Producers Association. The Universities of Hacttepe and Istanbul, represented by Professors Seyfi Kulaksy and Atye Tugrul, coordinated the Scientific Committee, as well as the Congress programming.

Sixty six abstracts were selected for the Congress for oral presentation and publication, out of a total 186 received by the Scientific Committee, coming from 12 different countries. Researchers and professionals from Brazil with interest in the dimension stone industry had 15 articles selected, representing the following institutions: CETEM, IPT, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), Universidade Estadual do Norte Fluminense (UENF), Brazilian Geological Survey (SGB/CPRM), Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSCar), Universidade federal de Alfenas (UNIFAL) and Universidade Estadual de Maringá (UEM).

Cooperation among Brazilian researchers and their integration has already inspired respect on the part of the international community, because it can be perceived by the papers that new

solutions, technologies and service support is being introduced that the Brazilian dimension stone industry has used to expand its markets and domestic and international competitive edge.

ABIROCHAS' role has been perceived throughout this articulation, to such a point that consultations on the part organizers of previous congresses on the possibility of Brazil hosting the next Global Stone were made, as a consequence of the perfect interaction between the industry and research and technical education verified in Brazil.

GSC 2018 - Brazil

The organization of GSC 2018, entitled "Connecting minds in the world of stone" is being oriented as a forum capable of holding the discussion of the challenges and opportunities regarding dimension stone's sustainability and industrial expansion in the 21st century. General and specific aspects will be touched upon in technical-scientific and economic viewpoints that affect local and global competitive factors, process and product technologies, management and reuse of waste and effluents, dissemination of life cycle and circular economy concepts, improvement of specification criteria, coverings placement and design, both for natural stone and artificial stone materials.

To serve the target public, presentations profiles to be selected for GSC 2018 will have keynote presentations, technical sessions with oral and panel presentations, as well as round tables with participation of Brazilian and foreign specialists, in addition to business workshops organized by representatives of the machinery, equipment and inputs segments, including representatives from the building industry. Technical visits of sector interest are also being programmed for the post-congress period, contemplating focus on quarrying and beneficiation in the states of Bahia, Espírito Santo and, possibly, Minas Gerais.