

***Seminar "From Frost to Desert Heat" in Commemoration of Sven Hedin  
And***

***On the occasion of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development and  
International Day for Biological Diversity***

***Wednesday 23 May 2012, Geological Survey of Iran***

Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights, which are universal, indivisible and interdependent. The flourishing of creative diversity requires the full implementation of cultural rights as defined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. All persons have therefore the right to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue; all persons are entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity; and all persons have the right to participate in the cultural life of their choice and conduct their own cultural practices, subject to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development provides us with an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to learn to "live together" better. The UN General Assembly proclaimed 21 May the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue in its resolution 57/249 and welcomed the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at its thirty-first session on 2 November 2001 and also welcomed the main lines of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Declaration.

The United Nations proclaimed May 22 the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. When first created by the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly in late 1993, 29 December (the date of entry into force of the Convention of Biological Diversity), was designated The International Day for Biological Diversity. In December 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted 22 May as IDB, to commemorate the adoption of the text of the Convention on 22 May 1992 by the Nairobi Final Act of the Conference for the Adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This was partly done because it was difficult for many countries to plan and carry out suitable celebrations for the date of 29 December, given the number of holidays that coincide around that time of year.

The event was held in commemoration of Sven Hedin, the Swedish explorer who in the beginning of the twentieth century travelled to Iran on numerous occasions, thus paving way for deepened relations and better understanding between Swedes and Iranians. This event was proposed by the Embassy of Sweden in Tehran and managed by Mr. Hamidreza Mahmoudi and collaboration of Ms Sadry Sharifi. It was organized in cooperation with the Embassy of Sweden in Tehran, Geological Survey of Iran, and Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, Iran's Cultural and Natural Heritage Devotee Organization, the National Committee of Bourgelat, and Iran Deserts team.

The invitees of this event were representatives from Monash Science Center of Australia, the Geological Survey of Iran, UNESCO, National Committee of International Committee of Museums (ICOM), National Committee of International Council on monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Iranian Veterinary Organization, UN agencies, different NGOs, representatives from different embassies in Tehran, students and professors from universities and the geological museum was visited by the participants.

This event gave all of the geologists, scientists and students in the field of eco tourism, as well as experts and stakeholders in the field of nature and culture , history and geography this opportunity to create a platform for dialogue among different nations, people and different cultures, and discussing and improving scientific collaboration in the field of Geology, Desert, and some related issues between Iran and Sweden, Especially in these days when world politics divide nations and the world powers seem to disagree on many fundamental issues , it's important to look beyond politics, start cooperating in fields where we are able to find common ground and to make people come together by creating a better understanding for each other. History has proven that Culture and Science does exactly that and against this background and undoubtedly it is one of the most important aims of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development.

It is worthy mentioned that, the most important thing Hedin accomplished is that he managed to do exactly was Culture Diversity Day is all about, thanks to his travels he founded a new platform for dialogue among two different nations and enabled discussion and improved cooperation in the scientific fields, he also created understanding of a foreign exotic people and their at the time fairly unknown traditions and culture. Mr. Sven Hedin made a great contribution in fulfilling the aims upon which the World Day for Cultural Diversity later was founded.

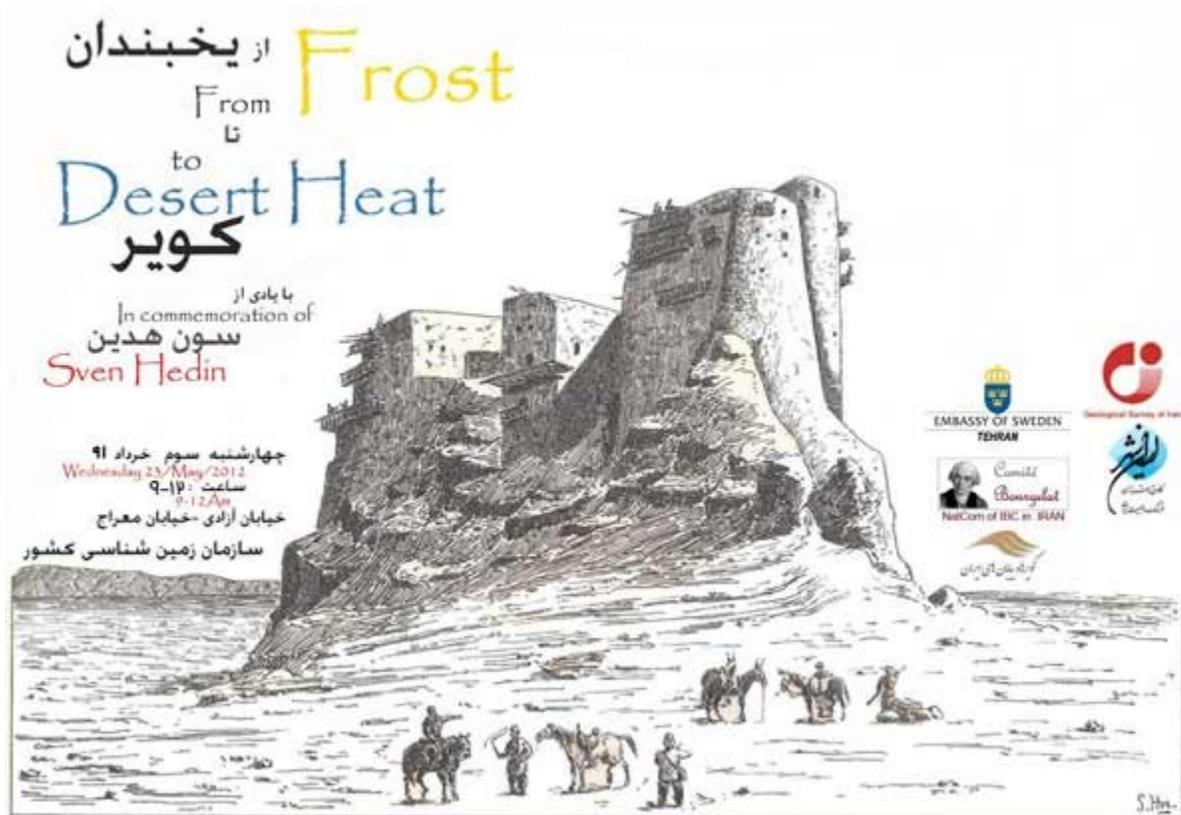
The keynote speakers of this event were as follow:

- Mr. Siavash Safarianpour, representative of the Star Peace Project  
Subject of Presentation; the Sky of Desert
- Mr. Eric Salmgren von Schantz, representative of the Embassy of Sweden in Tehran,  
Subject of Presentation; Biography of Mr. Sven Hedin  
Dr. Mohammad Ahyaee, Head of Iranshahr, (Iran's Cultural and Natural Heritage Devotee Organization), Subject of Presentation; Indigenous knowledge; peace between nature and human
- Dr. Mohammadreza Saeidabadi, Secretary General of Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, Subject of Presentation; World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development and International Day for Biological Diversity
- Mr. Jafar Sabouri, representative of Geological Survey of Iran, Subject of Presentation; The wonderest desert in the world, Lut, new finding and innovations
- Dr. Raziieh Lak, Mr. Alireza Salehipour, representatives of Geological Survey of Iran, subject of presentation; Quaternary environmental changes of Iran Playas

Mr. Sven Hedin was a Swedish explorer who made three journeys to Persia. Mr. Hedin, geographer by degree maintained a strong and committed relationship with the country for the rest of his life. Hedin was inspired by the trend at the time with many explorer excursions made by Europeans to far away land. It started already in 1886 when he at the

age of 21 embarked on what one today would call a “backpacking trip” through Persia. And it continued right through his life to his old age when he awaited the publication of a report on an archaeological excavation from Iran to China. During that period he had himself been back twice; in 1890 taking part in a diplomatic mission to the Shah’s court and in 1906 for a major period of research. This unbroken interest in and love for Iran, resulted in a string of travelogues, scientific reports, newspaper articles and talks, which introduced Iran, its geography, people and history to the Swedish public conveying an absorbing and attractive picture of Persia, its people and history.

Members to the task group and participants to the Seminar, in commemoration of Sven Hedin, proposed a set of recommendations, and called for the continuation of similar efforts and managed to follow in Sven Hedin’s footsteps and as such have started a new phase of confidence-building between Sweden and Iran.



Description of the poster: Sketch of Izadkhist, Abadeh, North of Shiraz, Iran, by Mr. Sven Hedin.









