

## **Chairperson's Summary**

### **The Fifteenth Science Council of Asia (SCA) Conference**

**May 15 – 17, 2015**

**Siem Reap, Cambodia**

#### **Introduction**

The Fifteenth Science Council of Asia (SCA) Conference was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from May 15-17, 2015 under the theme “Science and Technology for Culture.” The Conference was organized by the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport of Cambodia (MOEYS), the Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC), the Royal Academy of Cambodia (RAC) and the Science Council of Japan (SCJ) and sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia and the Architectural Institute of Japan (AIJ).

In total, the International Symposium was attended by 177 people from 16 countries/ regions.

#### **Summary of the Conference**

The Fifteen SCA Conference was composed of an International Symposium (Opening Ceremony, Plenary Session I & II, SCA Joint Project Workshop, Parallel Sessions A, B & C, Wrap-up Meeting, Panel Discussion and Closing Ceremony), SCA Management Board Meetings I & II and an Excursion.

#### **I. International Symposium**

##### **1. Welcome Remark and Opening Ceremony**

On the morning of the 15th May, the 15th SCA Conference began with the International Symposium. After the welcome remarks made by Prof. Vijaya KUMAR, President of the Science Council of Asia (SCA), the Symposium was formally inaugurated by H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon NARON, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport. The Minister and high ranking officials from the Cambodian government participated and showed great interest in the deliberations of the scientific conference. The Minister in his speech stressed on the importance of science and technology and reiterated his strong willingness to support the conference and its objectives. He expressed interest in the areas dealt with by Keynote speakers and the papers that were to be presented. He referred to the hard work his ministry was undertaking to promote science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics and stated that the 15th SCA was a worthwhile activity aligned with the strategies of the MOEYS.

##### **2. Plenary Session I& II with four Keynote Speeches**

Plenary Session I began on the morning of May 15<sup>th</sup> with the keynote speeches of Prof.

Takeshi NAKAGAWA, Director of Open Air Museum MEIJI-MURA, Japan and Prof. Dr. Rethy CHHEM, Executive Director of CDRI, Cambodia Prof. NAKAGAWA dealt with the “Potential challenges for the idea of harmony of a communal society and nature learnt from Egypt and Angkor” in which he highlighted the roots of cultural civilization of Cambodia and Japan in the past. An excellent comparison of case studies on the two cultures formed part of the presentation. Prof. Dr. Chhem RETHY of the Cambodia Development Research Institute of Cambodia then presented his findings on “Uncovering Human past using Medical imaging science and Technology”. The presenter emphasized the use of advanced technology to study ancient fossils and skeletons.

Plenary Session II was held on the morning of 16<sup>th</sup> May with two ~~2~~ more keynote speeches: Prof. Kiyoshi HIGUCHI, President of International Astronautical Federation and Dr. Phan NADY, Deputy-Director General for Heritage who made the presentation on behalf of H.E. Dr. Sackona PHOEURNG, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, Cambodia. Prof. Dr. Kiyoshi HIGUCHI made his presentation on “Space Technology: A powerful tool for our prosperous and secure society”. The use of modern space technology in launching satellites for TV broadcasting, car navigations, weather forecasting, and telecommunication was highlighted in his presentation. The presentation made by Dr. Phan NADY of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia on “Science and Technology for Cambodian culture heritage: An observation” focused on the past, present, and future restoration of Cambodian Temples.

### 3. SCA Joint Project Workshop

On the morning of May 16<sup>th</sup>, the SCA Joint Project Workshop was held and four presentations on research related to Cambodia were made on the theme of “Cambodian Heritage and Preservation and Environment of Ecosystem toward the Future”. They were made by Prof. Shinji TSUKAWAKI, Professor of Sedimentary Geology, Kanazawa University, Ad Hoc Expert of ICC-ANGKOR, Dr. Seiheng HUL, Director of Research, ITC, Dr. Sophal CHHUN, Secretariat- General for the National Council on Green Growth, Cambodia, Dr. Kosuke MATSUBARA, Associate Professor, University of Tsukuba.

Prof. TSUKAWAKI spoke on “Environmental Changes of Cambodia during the last 20,000 years and Environmental Changes of the Angkor World Heritage during the Last 20 years.” He pointed out the problems of environmental pollution caused by the increase of tourists in the Lake Tonle Sap and Angkor Heritage Sites.

Dr. HUL made a presentation on “Sustainable Platform for the Management of Biosphere Heritage in Cambodia” and proposed the development of analysis tools ~~of~~ for monitoring the water environment and the establishment of an Environment Center for Lake Tonle Sap, which was a UNESCO’s Biosphere Reserve. Dr. CHHUN spoke on “Natural Capital Accounting: Pathway to Sustaining the Flow of Ecosystem Services” and stressed the usefulness of Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) as part of a wide policy approach. In a presentation on “Japanese Collaborators in the Golden Age of Modern Khmer City and Architecture in Cambodia”, Dr. MATSUBARA explained the

significance and benefits of academic collaborations between Cambodia and Japan.

#### 4. Parallel Sessions A, B and C (Group I, II and III)

Sixty one technical papers were presented by researchers under three different themes, namely: Group I - Preservation of cultural heritage and disaster prevention, Group 2 - the food health and environment preservation in the era of changing climate, and Group 3 - sustainable development and the use of energy. The first group covered topics including urban planning, heritage conservation and renovation, disaster management, and discovery of ancient civilization. Case studies from Japan, Cambodia, Korea, China, and Malaysia were described in the session. The presentations of the second group were mainly about the impact of climate change on water resources, agriculture, and provided a socio-economic point of view. This group touched also on water treatment technology and the risks associated with chemically contamination of food. The third group focused on policy development for sustainability involving green business, green technology, green energy and the development of an eco-friendly life style.

#### 5. Wrap-up Meeting and Panel Discussion

The Wrap-up Meeting and Panel Discussion were held on the afternoon of 16<sup>th</sup> May, after the parallel sessions were concluded. Dr. Vijaya KUMAR, President of SCA presented a wrap up of the proceedings of the two days highlighting the fruitfulness and success of the conference. This was followed by a one-hour panel discussion led by Prof. Dr. Nordin HASAN, Immediate Past President of SCA, on how SCA members could work together to develop our cultural heritages and the role of science and technology for protecting and preserving world heritage. The guest speakers were invited to share their thoughts, experiences and expectations and propose immediate actions which could be undertaken by SCA. The healthy discussion which followed allowed participants and officials of SCA to mobilize these ideas to formulate a strategic plan.

#### 6. Closing Ceremony

H.E Chuch PHOEURN, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, in his closing ceremony presentation confirmed his strong support for the use of science and technology to preserve cultural heritage and declared his satisfaction with the outcome of the two day conference.

### **II. Excursion**

An excursion to the World Heritages such as Angkor was arranged for 17<sup>th</sup> May providing participants with an opportunity to see these world class heritage sites and to understand the significance of the marvelous job carried out by the ancestors of modern Cambodia.

### **III. SCA Management Board Meeting (MBM) I & II**

#### 1. MBM I

SCA Management Board Meeting I was held on the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> May. Applications for new SCA membership received from the Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS) and the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) were unanimously approved. A proposal to establish a Committee on Developing a Strategy for Future SCA Activities was also unanimously approved. The draft of a SCA joint declaration was distributed and the Chairman requested participants to come prepared with their comments on the draft so that the declaration could be finalized at the SCA Management Board Meeting II to be held next evening.

## 2. MBM II

At the SCA Management Board Meeting II held on the evening of the 16<sup>th</sup> May, the SCA declaration was adopted. Prof. Vijaya KUMAR, President of SCA and President of NASSL which is the National Member of Sri Lanka and will host the 16th SCA Conference, made an introduction on the said Conference. The Conference was planned to be held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at Galadari Hotel in Colombo, Sri Lanka, under the theme “Science for the People: Mobilizing New Technologies for Sustainable Development in Asia.” Prof. KUMAR announced that in accordance with the article 8 of SCA Statues, Prof. Mesbahuddin AHMAD, President, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) would be automatically appointed a new officer of SCA as President-Elect although Prof. AHMAD was unable to be present at the meeting, and Prof. Mohd Nordin HASAN’s term of office as the Immediate Past-President would end. At the end of the meeting, Dr. Om ROMNY, Director General of ITC, on behalf of host country, Cambodia handed over the SCA flag to the representatives of the host countries for next year Prof. KUMAR, President and Dr. Locana GUNARATNA, former President of NASSL .