

Presidential Report on the Conference of the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisations (CAFEO) and AFEO General Assembly, Jakarta Indonesia , 10-14 November 2013

By Ir. Choo Kok Beng, FASc



I was in Jakarta recently to attend the 31st Conference of the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisations 2013 (CAFEO31) which was held from 10-14 November 2013 with the theme "The Implementation of Green Infrastructure in ASEAN Countries". Nearly one thousand engineers from the 10 ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Philippines, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar) attended the event.

In conjunction with CAFE031, several high-powered meetings and events were held namely the AFEO Governing Board Meeting, FEIAP Exco Meeting and parallel sessions of the AER Meeting, AFEO Work Group Meetings, Awards Meeting, Women Engineers (WE-AFEO) Meeting, YEAFO Meeting as well as the half-day FEIAP Workshop on Engineering Education and Accreditation, Woman Engineer Forum on "Today's Challenge and Way Forward" and AFEO Business Networking sessions.

The Welcoming Reception was held after the golf competition the night of 10 November 2013 where the delegations from ASEAN Countries who were to receive their scrolls and medallions were given recognition after the sumptuous dinner.





The Conference kicked off with the Opening Ceremony officiated by the Minister of Works, Indonesia and this was later followed with the Country Report where each country was given a slot to present a Country Report and from the mood of the reports presented, the theme of 'Transformation for a Better Future' appeared to be in the air. This coincidentally ties up with what is happening in IEM where we are also going through a stage of Transformation to be more globalised.

One of the major highlights of the event was the Conferment of the AFEO Distinguished Honorary Patron to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono for his success in promoting ASEAN as one of the world's leading economic zones. The President received the award during a meeting with the AFEO delegation at the State Palace in Jakarta where the President had an audience with all Heads of the AFEO member organisations. The distinguished honorary patron medal is AFEO's highest award, which is only conferred upon Heads of State and Government. President Yudhoyono is the second ASEAN leader to receive the award, after Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen.





President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in his acceptance speech acknowledged that AFEO could play a major role in supporting the liberalisation and facilitation of free flow of skilled labour, particularly engineering within ASEAN. In this regard, he lauded and welcomed the role of the ASEAN Engineering Register (AER) in serving as a database for finding and mobilising engineers within the ASEAN region. He also pledged to give full support to AFEO, being one of the most influential personalities in ASEAN to do so.

I believe that as the permanent secretariat of AFEO and AER, IEM should leverage on this. Thus I urge the AFEO/AER Secretariat to spread the message across to the rest of the ASEAN nations. Our aim should be to beef up the membership of the AER to over 50,000 members. This I am confident can be reached by the time AFEO Mid-Term Meeting commences in Brunei in June 2014.

IEM was also greatly honoured to have been invited by Persatuan Insinyur Indonesia (PII) for a special session to brief them on the Code of Ethics. PII had communicated great interest on the issue, especially on our view that professionalism, engineering ethics and integrity can become saleable assets of an engineer which can become the means of sustainable revenue. Both IEM and PII agreed that a workshop will be conducted for PII members and IEM has been invited to provide the speakers for the workshop at a venue to be decided later.

Day 3 was a hectic day of meetings and technical sessions. The FEIAP Exco meetings, Working Group meetings and the AFEO Governing Board meeting took place before the event ended with the night celebration for the Banquet and Hon Membership presentation.



There were presentations of Distinguished Hon Fellow to two Ministers namely Ir. Jero Wacik, Minister of Energy Mineral of Resources, Indonesia who also was the Guest of Honour for the dinner. The night also witnessed the conferment of the Distinguished Hon Fellow to HE Mr Pongsak Ruktapongpisal, the Minister of Energy, Thailand. More conferment was presented to Hon Fellows and Hon Members from the various ASEAN countries.

The Outstanding Engineering Achievement Awards was then presented to the winning projects from the ASEAN member organisations. For Malaysia, Minconsult Sdn Bhd was given the award for the successful completion of the “Malaysia’s first State of the Art Automated Mail Processing Hub.”

The night ended with the country presentation whereby each country was invited to the stage for a performance. The members from each organisation demonstrated their vocal prowess and it was truly a night to remember with the Young Engineers from YEAFEO taking the centre stage performance.

CAFE031 ended with the technical visit to geothermal project in Bogor followed with the IICE Exhibition.

I find the CAFE031 to be very fruitful and am personally glad that the visit to the Palace had indicated that there is a lot of potential for the ASEAN Engineering Register to play an important role in the ASEAN Countries.