

WOMEN ENGINEERS GROUP FOR THE ASEAN FEDERATION OF ENGINEERING ORGANISATIONS

Formation of Women Engineers Group

At the recent 1th Mid Term meeting of the Asean Federation of Engineering Organisations, which was arranged back to back with the Women Conference on Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WISET 2012) in Kuala Lumpur, the Organising Committee had the onerous task of arranging both the conference and the AFEO mid term meeting. Part of the AFEO event was held in Kuala Lumpur with WiSET and with the help of the AER Head Commissioner, Ir. Choo Kok Beng, managed to get the IEM Negeri Sembilan Branch to co-host the second part of the event in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan and the Branch had also managed to get the State Government involvement.

From this experience, the Women Section of the IEM felt that it would now be timely to actively encourage women engineers to participate in future AFEOs and CAFEOs. This paper therefore seeks to approach the AFEO Governing Board to actively encourage more women to participate in future activities of the AFEO/CAFEO.

As a result of our successful completion of the WiSET Conference and the mid term meeting together with the women engineers from various parts of the world who have attended our Wiset conference, we felt that it is good opportunity for the IEM Women Section to proceed on to propose and to moot the idea of a Women Group within AFEO. The IEM Women Section felt that the yearly and continuous annual dialogue with our counter parts in ASEAN would be ideal for each country to integrate better and promote understanding of each other culture and environment further. AFEO is an ideal platform and vehicle for continued contact and interaction for all women both professional and the younger generation of women engineers in ASEAN.

On our own initiative and with the support of Ir. Choo Kok Beng and the AFEO Chairman, Ir. Dr Prak Min of Board of Engineers, Cambodia, the IEM Women Section would like to appeal to the AFEO Governing Board to allow a meeting of Women Engineers as part of the programme of the coming CAFEO 30 in Phnom Pehn. Member organisations of AFEO besides allowing this to be an item in the agenda of the AFEO Board, should also assist to provide women participate in this initial meeting for Women Engineers in Cambodia.

The AFEO Governing Board had in the early 1990s showed support to allow the formation of the Young Engineers Group of AFEO which is now known as YEAFEO. YEAFEO has representatives from young engineers from all the AFEO member organisations and has proven to be a very effective Group for AFEO. Similarly, the Women Engineers Group if approved to be formed could also prove is worthiness.

For the coming meeting in Phnom Penh, the IEM Women Section is proposing the following agenda:

- 1) Formulate a proposal for the participation of women engineers and professionals at future CAFEOs. This participation, for example could be in the form of activities which women engineers are able to organize including reporting on the role of women in respective ASEAN countries at technical sessions, reporting of discussion at the dialogue sessions back to their respective parent engineering organisations, organizing and participating in inter- activities, dialogue sessions amongst the women engineers and exchange of information concerning the women initiatives within the Asean region.
- 2) To look into collaboration work amongst the women engineers and the other profession within ASEAN
- 3) The meeting in Phnom Penh could also help to spell out the vision, mission and objectives Women Engineers of AFEO. With this, the Women Engineer Group could later moves on to recruit women engineers to join into the ASEAN Engineering Register. Membership is strength and with sizeable members Women Engineers in AFEO could be equally active as the YEAFEO.

It is therefore an intention to gather all the representatives of each of the national organisations of AFEO who would be attending CAFEO, to join in to initiate a protem committee for this formation. It is therefore imperative that all the AFEO member organisations should consider their support on such an initiative in the view of the increased expansion of international trade and services which includes technological expertise and engineering skills which is now able also to be a part for the women to play a significant role.

With the establishment of this Women Group and the protem committee, the Women Group/Section of ASEAN member organization will have a common platform for dialogue and interaction for future exchange of ideas and goodwill to further the co-operation between the engineering bodies in this region.

The Women engineers attending AFEO/ AFEO will not only benefit from the increased awareness of other national engineering bodies but will also gain from initiating and maintaining a regional platform for women engineers especially for the future of the women engineers of the younger generation.

The IEM Women Section therefore appeal for the approval of the concept that may complement the activities of AFEO/CAFEO and also provide an arena for women engineers to contribute its share and support.