

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Do Soon Chung

Director, Cultural and Social Centre for
the Asian and Pacific Region

Located in
Seoul, Korea

Excellencies, distinguished guests, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen:

It is my great honour and privilege to formally open the First Asian-Pacific Conference on Science Education and welcome you all to this beautiful city of Taipei.

The Cultural and Social Centre for the Asian and Pacific Region, in collaboration with its member governments, is dedicated to the promotion of mutual understanding and co-operation among the governments and peoples of this region in the fields of cultural and social affairs. While most of our activities and programs have centred on the cultural aspect of our work, the present conference represents the first time that we have gathered together under one roof such a large and impressive group of scholars and experts in science education from member and non-member countries.

On behalf of the Cultural and Social Centre, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of the Republic of China and H.E. Hwei-sen Chu, Minister of Education, whose enthusiastic support made this conference possible. My special gratitude is directed to Dr. Wei-fan Kuo, President of the National Taiwan Normal University, and members of the secretariat for the most excellent preparations they have made for this conference.

As you are aware, the purpose of this conference is to bring together specialists in science education to discuss and exchange views on effective ways and means to deal with science curriculums for changing times, the frontiers of educational technology in science education, and science teacher training for the future.

The change in the economy from agriculture to manufacturing that takes place with advancing industrialization affects deeply the role of schools, for they must be prepared to meet the altered educational requirements of work. Educational institutions can facilitate the necessary shift from manual to mental work and from a low to a high degree of knowledge and skill. Their task is very important because future economic development will depend more upon man-power quality rather than quantity. Since the end of World War II, almost all the countries in this region have made strenuous efforts to promote economic development, and they have achieved various degrees of success in the industrialization and modernization of their societies. In the course of such development, we must recognize that science education has played an important role in the foundation of national development. However, as industrialization continues, efforts should be made to revise curriculums and programs in science education in order to better meet the needs of respective countries.

I believe that the education of youths must be promoted in a way to take advantage of every possible opportunity. For this purpose, it is necessary to develop and strengthen the educational functions of schools, so as to bring up competent young people who will assume the responsibility for the future of the nations. We must also make every effort to help young people develop their personalities and abilities, strive for self-fulfillment, and lead satisfying lives throughout their lifetimes under changing social circumstances. The success of school education will be determined by how well it confronts rapid social changes. The needs for educational flexibility and the teaching of adaptability pose a challenge to the teachers of this region.

With this thought uppermost in mind, I now ask you to share with us and each other the fruits of your reflections as well as the benefits of your experience in our united effort to race against time. I have confidence in and deep reliance on the wisdom and expertise of our participants.

Excellencies, distinguished guests, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you all for your kind attendance and interest in the First Asian-Pacific Conference on Science Education which is now open.

Thank you.