

WECC2015 Newsletter No.6

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The Forerunner of WECC2015



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It is not widely recognized that before the establishment of WFEO in 1968, Japan had successfully hosted an international congress in 1929.

“October 24, 1929”. The day is known as “Black Thursday” when the Great Crash had burst. From the day after, the world had tumbled down to the Second World War which claimed lives of 50 to 80 million people.

5 days after the Black Thursday, however, the very first international conference of engineers, World Engineering Congress (WEC1929) was successfully convened in Tokyo, Japan with 4,500 participants from around the world. There is no “If” in history. But “if” the main theme of the conference “International Cooperation and Understanding” had been succeeded, the Second World War may not have occurred and WFEO could have been established 39 years earlier.

In this connection, I would like to look back on WEC1929 and have lessons for the success of coming WECC2015 in this November.

It was Dr. Elmer A. Sperry of American Society of Mechanical Engineers that proposed to hold WEC1929 in Japan. Accepting the proposal, Japan organized the Committee of WEC1929 with Prince Chichibu as Patron, Prime Minister Osachi Hamaguchi

as Honorary President, Baron Koi Furuichi, the President of Japan Federation of Engineering Societies, as President, and worked towards the success of WEC1929 with cooperative efforts between the public and private sectors and the academia.

Since the Meiji Restoration or the revolution for the national modernization in 1868, Japan had been successfully striving for the industrialization to catch up with western countries. In 1923, however, Japan was attacked by the Great Kanto Earthquake with M7.9 which claimed 105,000 lives and damage of 1/3 of GDP. It was feared that the modernization was threatened to fail. But in 1929, with reconstruction steadily advanced, Japan was in full confidence in showing the world that the reconstruction and modernization of Japan had been successfully progressed.

Only 4 years before WECC2015, Japan, the disaster prone country, was heavily attacked again by the Great East Japan Earthquake with M9.0 in 2011 which claimed 19,000 lives and 4% of GDP damage. Comparing the magnitude of the two earthquakes, we can estimate that the damage in 2011 would have been much severer if there were not anti-disaster schemes. The reconstruction from GEJEq has been in steady progress and the turmoil of economy has ceased. What is the key to the success? It is nothing other than the potential of engineering and the will of people or the power of culture to overcome the disasters on the foundation of economy.

At WECC2015 in Kyoto with the main theme of “Engineering: Innovation and Society”, Japanese engineering and culture will be presented to the world. And then, we will relay the experience of WECC2015 to WEC2019 in Melbourne.

Welcome to Kyoto
WECC2015

World Engineering Conference and Convention
Engineering: Innovation and Society

November 29 – December 2, 2015 Kyoto International Conference Center, Kyoto, Japan
WFEO General Assembly, Executive Council and Committee Meetings: November 28 - December 4 Technical Visits: December 3

Leaderships of WEC1929 in Tokyo



Article entitled "Defining the contribution of engineering to society" published in the Japan Times dated June 30, 2015.

The original article appeared on pp. 8-9 in the main section of the Japan Times dated June 30, 2015.

The article can also be accessed online via the following link:

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/column/the-japan-times-forum-on-engineering/>

WECC2015 Registration is now available online!

Registration and accommodation reservation is available from our official website:

<http://www.wecc2015.info/index.html>

We are looking forward to welcoming you all at the venue!



WECC2015 Organizing Committee / The Japan Federation of Engineering Societies

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