

Second Meeting Held of Asian Heads of Research Councils

On 26-28 November, second meeting of the Asian Heads of Research Councils was held at Grand Pacific Le Daiba.

Aim and Outline of the Meeting

At this meeting of the Asian Heads of Research Councils, or ASIAHORCs for short, the heads of research councils and research funding agencies in the Asian region met to exchange views and information on trends in S&T policy, research funding and international collaboration in their respective countries, within they did with an aim to strengthening the scientific research network within the Asian region.

The first meeting of ASIAHORCs was held in November 2007 in Kyoto. Representatives from eight Asian countries exchanged views on S&T policy and agreed to continue holding the meetings, while setting up a working group to consider the future agenda and composition of the ASIAHORCs body.

At the working group meeting held in April 2008, the purpose of ASIAHORCs was defined as follows: “Heads of research councils and research funding agencies in the Asian region to meet periodically to discuss how to promote science and technology that will over the long term advanced scientific research in areas of mutual interest among the members and to foster young generations of scientists.”

Results of the Meeting

The second meeting of ASIAHORCs (2008) was held on the theme “Creating a shared vision for advancing science and technology within Asia and establishing a support framework for nurturing and sustaining collaboration among the member countries.” Representatives of eight member institutions from Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore participated, along with a representative from New Zealand who attended as an observer. The representatives gave presentations and shared information and views on the current situations of science and technology policy and international S&T cooperation and on related challenges in their respective countries.

In the opening session a keynote speech, entitled “From My Experience,” was given by Dr. Makoto Kobayashi, 2008 Nobel Laureate in Physics, executive director of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and professor emeritus of the High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK). He told the story of what underscored the development of particle physics theory as an example of how science is advanced, and discussed factors that

enable the fruitful pursuit of original and creative research.

Presentations were given by the representatives of each country, who engaged in a frank discussion of multilateral collaboration including related arrangements, preferred fields and cost sharing. This exchange of views acted to deepen mutual understanding desirable for implementing joint projects under the ASIAHORCs scheme. After the meeting, 29 November, a working group was convened. It agreed that JSPS would organize an international joint symposium in 2009 as an ASIAHORCs pilot project and that the 3rd meeting of ASIAHORCs will be held in Seoul, Korea in 2009 and the 4th meeting in India in 2010. It was also agreed that ASIAHORCs membership will be expanded to include other countries from the 3rd meeting.

Also in the afternoon of the 28th the participants visited The University of Tokyo. Following an introduction and overview of The University of Tokyo given by Professor Akihiko Tanaka, director of International Affairs Division, the participants visited the laboratories for the Global COE Project “Chemistry Innovation through Cooperation of Science and Engineering.” After this visit, they met with international students enrolled in the university and discussed with them their reasons for studying in Japan and problems they may be experiencing learning Japanese.

Principal Achievements

The representatives agreed that an international joint symposium will be organized by JSPS in cooperation with other ASIAHORCs member institutions.

The representatives agreed that the venue for ASIAHORCs meetings was expanded from Japan with the 3rd meeting to be held in Seoul, Korea in 2009 and the 4th meeting in India in 2010.

The representatives agreed that ASIAHORCs membership will be expanded to include other countries.



Group Photo



Keynote Speech by Dr. Kobayashi



Presentation Session



Presentation Session



Introduction of The University of Tokyo



Meeting with international students