

ASAIHL Conference and Board meeting

15 December 2020

This is the first time in our 65 years of ASAIHL history that we conducted an online election of officers.

Tan Sri Professor Dato Dr. Syed Jalaludin, former ASAIHL President, who has served as Chairman of the Election Committee for the past 20 years presented the nomination list for endorsement by the General Conference and the following were duly nominated and duly seconded at the election on 15 December 2020 at 15.50 hours Bangkok time.

1. Prof. Dr. Yoshihisa Baba, President, Soka University, Japan, President of ASAIHL
2. Prof. Dr. Mohammad Nasih, Rector of Universitas Airlangga, Vice-President of ASAIHL
3. Datin Dr. Anita B Z Abdul Aziz, Vice Chancellor, University Brunei Darussalam
4. Prof. Dr. Bundhit Eua-arporn, President, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
5. Prof. Dr. Alojzy Z. Nowak, President, University of Warsaw, Poland
6. Prof. Way Kuo, President, City University of Hong Kong
7. Prof. Dr. Chandrika N Wijeyaratne, Vice-Chancellor, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka
8. Prof. Dr. Etienne Saur, Rector, University of Science & Technology of Hanoi
9. Prof. Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Tehranchi, President, Islamic Azad University, Iran
10. Prof. Dr. Chung-Ming Kuan, President, National Taiwan University
11. Dr. Michel Eddi, President Director General of CIRAD, France
12. Prof. Amy Storey, President, Keuka College, New York, U.S.A.
13. Assoc. Prof. Seiha Diep, Rector, Build Bright University
14. Fr. Marcelo V. Manimtim, President of Adamson University
15. Prof. Dato' Dr. Mohammad Shatar bin Sabran, Vice-Chancellor, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris

Acceptance speech by newly elected President of ASAIHL Address by Soka University President at the ASAIHL Board Meeting (12/15)

Most respected Dr. Suchatvee Suwansawat, President of ASAIHL;
Tan Sri Dr. Syed Jalaludin Sed Salim, Former ASAIHL President and Chairman of Election Committee;
Dr. Dwia Arries Tina Pulubuhu, First Vice-President;
Dr. Ninnat Olanvoravuth, Secretary-General;
and the members of the board.

Good Afternoon. As introduced, I am Yoshihisa Baba, President of Soka University in Japan. I am honored to be recommended as the next President of ASAIHL, a network of institutions of higher learning which upholds a long history and traditions. I am a little bit anxious whether I can shoulder such an important responsibility, however, I will do my best to meet your expectations. Please allow me to make a few remarks at this board meeting.

Among other Japanese universities, Soka University has long been a member of ASAIHL and has been participating in the annual conferences and academic exchanges with the member universities. Owing to such activities, we were able to conclude exchange agreements with about 130 universities in Asia and are also developing international exchanges with universities from all the member countries of ASEAN. It is indeed a great pleasure to see that ASAIHL has now expanded its network not only in Asia, but also in Europe, the United States, and the Middle East, contributing extensively to the development of global educational and research exchanges. I would like to express my heartfelt respect for all the efforts of the board members.

I have also learned a lot through the ASAIHL General Conference and the exchanges with the professors involved, which have been very helpful in the education and research at Soka University, as well as its globalization. As a result, Soka University was selected for the Top Global University Project initiated by the Japanese government in 2014. In March 2018, we were able to hold the ASAIHL Annual Conference for the first time in Japan at our campus in Hachioji City, Tokyo as the host, under the cherry blossoms in full bloom. It was a great honor and a historic moment for us.

Soka University will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in April next year, and as part of its commemorative events, we held an online lecture event this October, inviting Executive Director Beatrice Fihn of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) which received a Nobel Peace Award in 2017. Executive Director Fihn offered words of encouragement to the students who are continuing to study hard even in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation. She also shared the organization's initiatives toward the enforcement of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. To our delight, more than 50 countries have ratified the treaty which was the minimum requirement, and it will officially enter into force as international law on January 22, 2021. In the lecture, Executive Director Fihn emphasized that one person alone cannot change the world but the collective action of the people can.

She also said she believes that it is sought for us, institutions of higher education, to unite and take collective actions, and to contribute to fostering capable individuals who can boldly challenge in finding solutions for various issues surrounding the world, through our academic research activities. In that sense, the network of ASAIHL and its role are crucial to meet the great expectations which society has for institutions of higher learning.

I am determined to make the utmost effort for the further development of ASAIHL. I humbly ask the members of the board for your guidance and support.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Suchatvee Suwansawat, for his leadership and contributions to the development of ASAIHL over the past two years. Thank you very much for your excellent service. This concludes my remarks. Thank you for your attention.

Three Keynote Addresses

1. Prof. Dr. Ken Furuya, Director/Institute of Plankton Eco-engineering, Soka University delivered a keynote address on "International research collaboration at Soka University: Towards the sustainable utilization of plankton resources"
2. Dr. Pornchai Mongkhonvanit, President of Siam University gave a presentation on SDGs in Action: University as a Living Lab for Sustainability.
3. Ms. Melissa Ong CEO, South East Asia, Thought For Food Foundation spoke on "Thought For Food and our works in Food-Ag Innovation and revolution in South East Asia"
4. Talent Training program by CIRAD

All presentation PPT can be found in this [LINK](#).