

FOREWORD

Toward the Globalization of JSCE

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Since its founding in 1914, the Japan Society of Civil Engineers (JSCE) has played a leadership role as one of Japan's preeminent academic associations in each era, including the modernization of Japan in the early 20th century, the reconstruction of the totally devastated country after World War II, and the succeeding rapid economic development. With eight branch offices nationwide and approximately 40,000 members, the society is currently quite active in the domestic field. However, its international activities are not similarly flourishing, requiring much improvement. For example, there are currently 53 Japanese members and 105 non-Japanese members of JSCE residing abroad, but there is not even one branch office outside Japan; and the only member service performed for overseas members is distribution of the society's journal written in Japanese. The publications introducing the activities and research of JSCE overseas are merely the English language journals which are produced independently by some specialized committees (five such journals at present) and this publication, *Civil Engineering, JSCE*, which is issued once each year. The international activities of the society pale in comparison to its domestic activities, and it is no exaggeration to say that the Japan Society of Civil Engineers lacks an international presence.

Looking back on the efforts of JSCE toward internationalization during the decade, there has been a little progress in accords with other academic associations overseas. Beginning with the one signed with American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) in 1988, JSCE has concluded nine such accords so far. The main forms of exchange are mutual visits and attendance at commemorative events by the chairs of these associations. Except for the invitation of chairs of these associations to attend the event commemorating the 80th anniversary of JSCE, there has been almost no activity based on initiative from the JSCE side. Moreover, the academic exchange, information exchange, and personal exchange based on these accords have been extremely limited in size and contents up to the present time.

In view of these circumstances, JSCE has concluded that its current involvement in internationalization is not sufficient as the world enters an era of internationalization, and has begun making efforts to improve.

As an example, in February 1998, the 1st Civil Engineering International Conference on Asian Infrastructure, Sustainable Development, and Project Management was held under joint sponsorship with ASCE and Philippine Institute of Civil Engineers (PICE) and was attended by other seven overseas associations. This was successful in introducing a new form of conferences held by several academic associations linked by accords, which had not been previously seen, and, JSCE has begun necessary preparations to hold the 2nd Conference in Japan around the year 2000.

The following are some of the areas of international information and publicity which JSCE is considering:

- [1] Issuing a newsletter
- [2] Regularly issuing an annual report
- [3] Setting up an English language site on the World Wide Web
- [4] Planning and holding international conferences and international symposia
- [5] Internationalization of the JSCE annual lecture
- [6] Translating collections of JSCE papers into English
- [7] Translating civil engineering standards into English

During the era of modernization in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Japan had the experience of receiving technical guidance from many foreigners. Their advice was adequate in most cases, while not necessarily appropriate in some cases. In addition, during the postwar period of rapid economic development, Japan experienced mistakes that resulted from placing top priority on the economy. These two experiences would be highly valuable with regard to the transfer of technology to other countries, and Japan can use its experience to make international contributions of very high quality. Moreover, since Japan has performed some of the world's leading civil engineering projects, it has the responsibility to make international contributions in the field of civil engineering for the other countries of the world. It is my hope that JSCE could play a part in these contributions toward globalization as an opinion leader.



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