

ICEE/ICIT 2013 Conference

Welcome Remarks by Professor Radim Farana, *Ph.D.*
Member, iNEER Board

Dear Delegates of ICEE/ICIT 2013, Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is my pleasure and privilege to warmly welcome all of you in the name of iNEER board to the joint ICEE/ICIT 2013 Conference in Cape Town, South Africa. We are extremely happy that the iNEER conference series finally has reached the African continent. The foundation stone of the International Conference on Engineering Education was laid in the years 1994 and 1995 in Taipei, Taiwan. Since then, there has been a continuous line of ICEE conferences, starting in 1997 in Chicago, USA and continuing through Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1998 to Czech Republic in Ostrava in the year 1999, when my university, the Technical University of Ostrava, proudly hosted the ICEE 1999 conference. For almost 20 years, the series of iNEER-sponsored conferences has visited various locations in Europe, Asia and the Americas, including the USA.

The long and successful tradition of this fruitful conference initiated the establishment of the iNEER organization, which was firstly presented at the ICEE conference in the year 2000 in Taipei, Taiwan.

Next year, in 2014, the iNEER community will meet at ICEE 2014 in Riga, Latvia. The host of that conference will be the Riga Technical University. At present, the iNEER Board is considering proposals from universities in Croatia, Spain, Mexico, and Israel to hold future conferences.

iNEER has become the guarantor of quality, of broad representation and inclusiveness in international conferences and publications. Its focus on research and development and the integration of research with education, which is a logical part of engineering education, initiated a new series of conferences called International Conference on Engineering Education and Research, or iCEER. We were honoured that our Technical University of Ostrava was entrusted with the organization of its first iCEER in the year 2004 in Olomouc, Czech Republic. This year's edition of the iCEER conference, iCEER 2013, was held just a few months ago in Africa, in Marrakesh, Morocco.

Recent changes and development in new information technologies led iNEER to start a new series of conferences called International Conference on Information Technologies, with the first edition organized by our friends from the Saratov State Technical University named by Yuri Gagarin in 2012 in Saratov, Russia. The second edition is now held here in Cape Town, South Africa as the joint ICEE/ICIT 2013 conference.

The following chronological list of iNEER sponsored conferences shows that, for nearly 20 years, iNEER has brought to many countries around the world the iNEER vision of promoting mutual progress through international cooperation:

- 1994: ICEE – Taipei, Taiwan, ROC
- 1995: ICEE – Taipei, Taiwan, ROC
- 1997: ICEE – Chicago/Carbondale, IL, USA, August 13-15
- 1998: ICEE – Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, August 15-20

- 1999: ICEE – Ostrava/Prague, Czech Republic, August 10-14
- 2000: ICEE – Taipei/Tainan, Taiwan, ROC, August 13-18
- 2001: ICEE – Oslo/Bergen, Norway, August 6-10
- 2002: ICEE – Manchester, UK, August 18-22
- 2003: ICEE – Valencia, Spain, July 21-25
- 2004: ICEE – Gainesville, FL, USA, October 17-21
iCEER – Olomouc, Czech Republic, June 27-30
- 2005: iCEER – Taipei/Tainan, Taiwan, ROC, March 1-5
ICEE – Gliwice, Poland, July 25-29
- 2006: ICEE – San Juan, Puerto Rico, July 23-28
- 2007: ICEE – Coimbra, Portugal September 3-7
iCEER – Melbourne, Australia, December 3-6
- 2008: ICEE – Pecs/Budapest, Hungary, July 28-31
- 2009: ICEE/iCEER – Seoul, Korea, August 23-28
- 2010: ICEE – Gliwice, Poland, July 18-22
- 2011: ICEE – Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK, Aug. 21-26
- 2012: ICIT – Saratov, Russia, June 6-9
ICEE – Turku, Finland, July 30 – August 3
- 2013: iCEER – Marrakesh, Morocco, July 1-5
ICEE/ICIT – Cape Town, South Africa, December 8-12
- 2014: ICEE – Riga, Latvia, June 3-6
- 2015: ICEE – Madrid, Spain, (proposed: June 15-19)
ICEE – Zagreb, Croatia, (proposed: July 20-24 or August 24-28)
- 2016: iCEER – Mexico City, Mexico (proposed: July 10-14)
ICEE – Haifa, Israel (proposed: July 2016)

I invite you to contribute your papers and to participate in the upcoming conferences shown in the list above.

The developments, challenges and opportunities on the African continent are different from that of the rest of the world. However, one common trait is that in order to develop and upgrade infrastructure there is a need for more engineers, and the throughput of the engineering professionals needs to be increased. There is thus a need for a steady stream of highly qualified and innovative engineering graduates. And there is a need for more focus on mathematics and physical sciences in schools. This is where we fit in – the engineering educators.

Although we are in Africa, this conference has a global scope. There are many interesting, ongoing and related endeavors worldwide. The European Union has responded to the changing world and the need for global cooperation in science and engineering and decided that the results of all projects supported by the EU must be published in Open Access mode, this principle has been incorporated as an integral part of the projects of Horizon 2020. This principle opens not only a way but a “highway” for sharing knowledge all over the world and for cooperation all over the world. This makes the world really “flat”. The problems we solve in different parts of the world look to be different, but if we examine their reasons, we see, that they have very similar bases and many of them could be solved by similar technologies, mostly by engineers. Therefore I often remind my students: “You, as an engineer, must be able to solve every existing problem by respecting the people, their needs, history, culture, social impact and especially the care for nature and the environment”. This is leading the way right through to high quality education. I am very happy that one of my most famous

compatriots – John Amos Comenius, a Czech Moravian teacher, educator and writer who was one of the earliest champions of universal education, laid the foundations of modern teaching methods at the beginning of seventeenth century. His ideas are still practical today and we are still learning from them.

You have all contributed to the ICEE/ICIT 2013 conference program which addresses a wide range of topics including accreditation and quality assurance in engineering education in Africa, outreach engineering education programs, international and regional campus networks, partnerships and stakeholders, distance education, laboratory experiences, student learning assessment and science technology and mathematics education.

On behalf of the iNEER Board, especially our Chair Tomas Cermak and Secretary-General Win Aung, I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all the individuals who have made this conference possible, most of all to Nico Beute, Cathy Cloete and Bennett Alexander from the Organising Committee and Anneke de Klerk and Nadia Cassiem from Conference Secretariat, but also to all our friends at Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Their hard work and generous hospitality is greatly appreciated.

And now to all of you: I hope you will make the most of the conference. Many of you are presenting papers and sharing your experiences, and some of you come to seek inspiration and new ideas. I am sure that all of us will use the session breaks for personal meetings to exchange knowledge and experiences and to establish new personal contacts. For foreign participants, this conference offers the possibility to learn more about Africa, its rich history and tradition, its culture, its famous land and natural beauty and, for me this is most important – about the people of South Africa.

I wish you a rewarding week in Cape Town!

Thank you!

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iNEER Board and ICEE-ISC Member

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