

Women Write the Future of Science

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Until not so long ago, women were often passed over in the area of science due to the fact that the field had been male-dominated for so many years. This is easily seen in the history of science where most renowned scientists are men. The 13th International Conference of Women Engineers and Scientists (ICWES13) is a conference where science handed over the microphone to women from August 26 to 29. The theme for this year's conference was "Women Engineers and Scientists: Main Force to Reshape the Future World."

Monique Frize, president of the International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists (INWES), said how women's roles are increasing to reshape the future, saying "An equitable world can be achieved by educating both girls and boys in science." We need to educate women to be in positions of power. If women are not on top,



▲ Female scientists and engineers discussed female leadership and gender-related issues in the area of science. [Photo by Kim Bo-mi]

they cannot make major decisions. Women need to be at all levels: in universities, in the industrial sectors, on board committees, and in management positions.

Around 700 participants from 53 countries were present, including prominent female scientists such as Vice President Irene Aegerter of the Swiss Academy of Engineering Sciences and Member of the Federal Commission on Nuclear Safety, and Kathy Hill of Cisco Systems, Inc. Also presenting in the plenary sessions were Dr. Linda J. Keen of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission; Dr. Morrow Monique from Cisco Systems, Inc.; Professor Norah K. Olembo from the Africa Biotechnology Stakeholders Forum; Dr. Park Ky-young from the Advisory to the President for Information, Science and Technology; and Professor Ada E. Yonath from the Weizmann Institute of Science.

The ICWES13 Chairperson Jung Myung-hee and the Organizing Committee Chairperson, Lee Kong-joo (Molecular Life Sciences) led the whole event. Professor Lee says, "ICWES13 being held in Ewha is very symbolic since Ewha is widely accepted as the mecca of women's education. It also provides hope and role models for future women scientists and engineers."

"Men are overvalued and women are undervalued. Since it is the masculine perspective that judges women as to what is good or bad, women are left with less chances. However, I see hope in the future of women scientists and engineers as there is some evidence that companies with more women employed in decision-making positions earn higher profit," says Frize.

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