

LOOKING BACK, MOVING AHEAD

AT THE 2013 GENERAL MEETING IN BUENOS AIRES, TWAS MEMBERS CELEBRATED 30 YEARS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY THE ACADEMY AND ITS MEMBERS. BUT THERE WAS A STRONG FOCUS ON THE FUTURE.

Once a year, the *TWAS Newsletter* has the opportunity to highlight the pinnacle of TWAS's work: our General Meeting, bringing together top-shelf scientists from across the globe to a developing country. This edition is even more special, however, because the General Meeting was the scene of another special milestone – the Academy's 30th anniversary.

Since its founding in 1983, TWAS has become a force behind the prosperity of science in countries that don't enjoy the resources or scientific infrastructure found in the developed world. The Academy's 30th anniversary presented a chance to celebrate TWAS's long history of accomplishments and envision what the future may bring.

"In this meeting we are celebrating 30 years of the academy and this is a reason to be proud", Elías Micha Zaga, adjunct director for regional development at Mexico's National Council on Science and Technology (CONACYT), told the audience.

The 2013 TWAS General Meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina, was the scene of hope and celebration. More than 300 researchers, top science policy officials and educators attended to share ideas and reinforce global connections. At the meeting, Argentinian science Minister Lino Barañao said this century will be critical for the future of humanity because the planet will have to support more than two billion additional people by 2050.

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Left to right: Minister Lino Barañao, Argentina; Minister Derek Hanekom, South Africa; Elías Micha Zaga, CONACYT, Mexico. (Photos: Roque Silles)





From left: José I. Vargas, Jacob Palis, Immacolata Pannone, Mohamed H.A. Hassan, Alessandra Di Pippo, C.N.R. Rao, Bai Chunli, Romain Murenzi.

(Photos: Roque Silles)

Below left to right: Fang Xin, OWSD; Fu Shuqin, CAS; Romain Murenzi, TWAS. Jorge Grandi, UNESCO. Palis, TWAS; filmmaker Nicole Leghissa.

(Photos: Roque Silles)

“This implicates tantamount challenges in terms of food, energy and health that can only be dealt with through transforming achievements in science and technology”, Barañaó said.

Further PhD opportunities through TWAS are also on the horizon through pledges from India, Argentina and South Africa to begin new fellowship programmes.

“It’s important that among the developing countries, those that have some advantages or who are slightly stronger take greater responsibility to strengthen TWAS”, said Derek Hanekom, the South African minister of Science and Technology at the meeting. “I include South Africa in that. Because there are some countries with very little resources. Countries that are better resourced need to take the greatest burden of responsibility to strengthen the Academy.”

In reflection of the long road TWAS has travelled, the Academy honoured two women who provided decades of commitment to our common cause: Immacolata Pannone, scientific expert in the Bilateral and

Multilateral Scientific and Technological Unit of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Fu Shuqin, past director of the TWAS Regional Office for East & South-east Asia within the Chinese Academy of Sciences. They received plaques that commemorate their tireless efforts to support TWAS in its mission.

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TWAS also premiered the new film *Seeds of Science* by Trieste filmmaker Nicole Leghissa, presenting a rich example of how the Academy’s work building scientific skill in the developing world improves the lives of ordinary citizens.

Jorge Grandi, the Uruguayan who directs UNESCO’s regional bureau for science in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighted the role of academies like TWAS. “UNESCO is pleased for its collaboration with TWAS over the years”, Grandi said, “and looks forward to future opportunities to work together, especially with the challenges we face in targeting science to ensuring global sustainability.”

◆◆◆ Sean Treacy

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