

From Technical Committee

Dear Members,

I am writing this report just one week after the Annual Assembly (AA) and International Conference of the International Institute of Welding (IIW) at Istanbul, Turkey. Welding fraternity in India has many reasons to be proud of in that mega event. Dr. Baldev Raj, former president of our Institute has been elected as President Elect of IIW and this is the first time that an Indian has been selected to this prestigious post. India was among the countries that had sent highest number of delegates to this event and of course, with around forty delegates, this is the largest delegation that our country has sent to any annual assembly so far. On technical front also, India broke its previous records. We had five technical documents presented in various technical commission meetings, two invited and many contributed papers in the International Conference. Needless to say, almost every body who attended the event is looking forward to next Annual Assembly in India. Indian delegates also participated very effectively in the meeting of International Authorization Board (IAB) of the IIW to protect India's interest in the International Diploma programmes offered by IIW and currently conducted by Authorized Training Body (ATB) of the Indian Institute of Welding.

India's effective participation in the Annual Assembly has also thrown up lot of challenges for us as the host nation for the next assembly. Since many participants rated the Istanbul event as one of the best Annual Assemblies so far, it has become necessary for us to match the next year event with that of the Turkey this year. A good technical programme and an active participation from our country in this programme are absolutely essential to achieve this. Hence, I appeal to all the members of IIW to take this aspect seriously and plan for an active technical participation in the Annual Assembly that will be held in Chennai during next July. You may also inform your friends and former colleagues both with in the country and outside about this event and invite them to participate.

As I have written in the past in this column, participation in the meetings of Technical Commissions of the IIW is one of the best ways for a welding engineer or scientist to enrich his knowledge as well as contribute to his/her specific field of expertise in welding or allied areas. Now, 'Welding in the World' the official journal of the International Institute of Welding, being selected for citation index and the full manuscripts of the presentations made in the commission meetings are being reviewed for publication in 'Welding in the World', presentation in the Technical Commission meeting is also a good way to get our work published in an International Journal. Dr. Baldev Raj who sat through many of the technical commission meetings is convinced that India should have at least one member in each of the Technical Commissions of IIW who can attend these commission meetings regularly. Soon some of these members should also take over as Chairmen of the Commissions. His modest ambition for India's share in IIW activities is 15%, India's share in the world population! This means that Indian delegation shall be 15% of the delegates that attend the Annual Assembly every year, 15% of the members of various commissions of IIW shall be from India and Indians should head at least 15% of the technical commissions etc. Unfortunately, India's participation in activities of IIW at present is far below this and that is why we need to gear up. And the upcoming Annual Assembly is the best opportunity to give a kick start to this campaign.

Hence, my appeal to honourable members of IIW, especially those in academia, is to mark your calendar today itself for Annual Assembly of IIW in July 2011 and contribute technical documents that can be presented in the various commission meetings during Annual Assembly. Today in India, we have many academic Institutes where welding research is going on like IIT Madras, IIT Bombay, IIT Roorkey, NIT Trichy, Jadavapur University, PSG College of Technology, MS University Baroda etc. However, in the recent past, there was not even a single participation from any of these Institutes in the Annual Assembly. In contrast, there are many university professors among the delegates from countries like Japan, Austria, USA, Germany and some of them hold the important and responsible position in the technical commissions and Technology Management Board (TMB) of the Institute. Participation in these meetings is a good opportunity to initiate international collaboration in areas of common interest because meetings are attended by best brains on a specific area of welding like welding consumables, design, processes, fatigue, NDT etc. from each member countries of the IIW, and during discussions, areas of common interest crop up automatically. This has been my personal experience and those of others who attended the technical committee meetings.

I also request Indian corporates, especially those associated with welding consumables and equipments, fabrication and construction to support the Indian Institute of Welding in its endeavor to strengthen the participation of India in the activities of International Institute of Welding. They should support and encourage the best technical minds in their organization to participate and contribute to technical commission that are of interest to them. It should not be overlooked that IIW is an Independent body that can propose standards in the field of welding to ISO and many of these standards evolve from the joint efforts initiated by the members of the technical commissions in their respective field of expertise. Hence, our absence in these commissions means that we end up accepting what others decided as ISO standards. On the other hand, our participation will not only ensure that our interests are protected while such standards are being formulated but also give us an opportunity to propose standards based on our expertise that could be accepted by the whole world.

High registration fee for the annual assembly is a major stumbling block in our efforts to increase our participation in the activities of IIW. The Indian Institute of Welding alone cannot bear this huge expenditure and we are approaching government agencies for support. We also look forward to patronage of Indian Industries in this regard. Industries shall come forward to support India's participation in the technical commissions that are of interest to them. For example a welding consumable manufacturer can sponsor participation in Technical Commission II or a pressure vessel fabricator can support participation in Technical Commission IX. What is important is the this support shall be continuous and long lasting so that India is represented in the relevant commissions without any break and India take up leadership position in that commission.

I look forward to a positive response from members of IIW for the appeal that I have made here. I also request the members to log on to the new IIW website www.iiwelding.org to find out more about IIW and www.iiwindia.com for details on next annual assembly in India.

Shaju K. Albert
Chairman, Technical Committee