



“ United Nations gatherings are places where the voices of engineers not only should, but also *must* be heard.”

*D. Danyluk, Chair,
World Federation of Engineering
Organisations Standing
Committee on Engineering and the
Environment*



Making Our Voices Heard At the U.N. and Beyond

By Darrel Danyluk, P.Eng.

*Darrel Danyluk chairs the
WFEO Standing Committee
on Engineering and the
Environment.*

It is important to be heard. Therefore, I am pleased that we again are publishing the CEE newsletter after a 18-month break while the Committee developed its strategic plan. The newsletter serves as a communication vehicle within the CEE and WFEO, and for wider audiences.

By training and disposition, engineers are inclined to focus on technical matters, while often leaving to others issues of communication, diplomacy and international politics. In adopting such an approach, we may be side-stepping our professional duty and obligations to society.

United Nations gatherings are places where the voices of engineers not only should, but also *must* be heard. There are increasing signs that this is happening. For example, in May 2008, our Federation President Barry Grear, accompanied by the chairs of the WFEO Standing Committees on Energy, Capacity Building, and Environment, presented views on world engineering to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UN-CSD). This was the third year in a row that WFEO has participated in the UN-CSD. I participated in the Feb. 9 preparatory meetings and

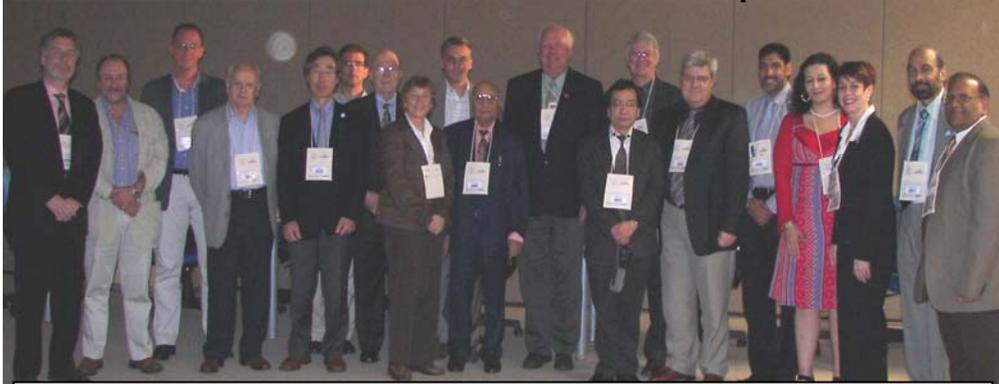
look forward to the CSD-17 session in May 2009. Significantly, the UN-CSD remains receptive to expert presentations from the engineering community on identified issues.

The June 2008 gathering of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bonn, Germany, provided another venue to raise the WFEO and CEE's profile. CEE Member Paul Jowitt (president-elect of the Institution of Civil Engineers) of the United Kingdom joined me at our "side event". The latter provided UNFCCC delegates and others a better understanding of our interest in climate change, with specific reference to adaptation of infrastructure and the PIEVC Protocol. Later, the WFEO received observer status allowing participation in future UNFCCC sessions.

The UN-CSD and UNFCCC both report to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). I had the pleasure of leading the WFEO delegation at ECOSOC's July 2008 meeting. At a breakfast with attending ministers, I briefly summarized WFEO activities and seemed to strike a chord with the diplomatic audience by calling the WFEO the "UN of Engineering".

Effective communication entails repeating the message as often and on as many fronts as possible. The engineers' message may not have got through everywhere, but it is on its way at the UN and elsewhere.

CEE Strategic Plan To Serve as Roadmap



WFEO's Standing Committee on Engineering and the Environment held an in-person meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, in December 2008.

Following one year's consultation, the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) Standing Committee on Engineering and the Environment (CEE) has ratified its strategic plan.

CEE Chair Darrel Danyluk, P.Eng., sees: "The strategic plan is providing us with a roadmap and signposts to guide the Committee through our four-year mandate."

CEE formally approved the plan on Dec. 1, 2008, during a meeting held in Brasilia, Brazil, as a prelude to the World Engineers' Convention. The ratified document now has been forwarded to the WFEO Secretariat.

Besides spelling out a WFEO-CEE vision and mission statement, the plan outlines the CEE's mandate, a key component of which entails: "Identifying and documenting national and international trends in engineering practice related to the environmental impacts of major engineering projects and infrastructure development in developing countries, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management."

Also specified is the CEE's role in organizing international workshops and seminars, particularly ones relating to major engineering projects. The plan

further underlines the CEE's responsibilities in connection with United Nations initiatives and conferences.

The document's operating principles call on the CEE to "fulfill a facilitating role among its national members and the WFEO community."

Significantly, the strategic plan delineates six broad themes within which CEE will focus its activities. Reporting to the CEE chair, a CEE member will lead each theme area. The themes (with the respective chairs in brackets) and key objectives of each theme are:

1) Environmental Impacts of Major Engineering Projects for Summer and Winter Olympics (Engr. Spyros Papagrigroriou, Greece) – building on the experiences of recent large-scale Olympic sporting events and communicating these experiences to future organizing committees.

2) Engineering and Climate Change Adaptation (Darrel Danyluk, P.Eng., Canada) – understanding the relationship of a changing climate and existing infrastructures, and developing tools for engineers to use in assessing the impacts.

3) Disaster Risk Management (Dr. Yumio Ishii, Japan) – introducing or recommending basic concepts, effective structural and non-structural measures, and technologies for risk management of water-related and earthquake disasters.

4) Sustainable Development (Professor Paul Jowitt, United Kingdom) – on engineering matters related to sustainability.

5) Environmental and Sustainable Engineering Practices for Engineers (Darrel Danyluk, P.Eng., Canada) – developing an international guideline on the environment and sustainability for engineers.

6) Infrastructure in Developing Countries (Cdr Arvind Poothia (Retd), India) – working towards ensuring a proper infrastructural development in developing countries.

WFEO-CEE Upcoming Events

Theme 2 – Climate Change

Adaptation

12-15 May, 2009, Hamilton, Canada
2nd Climate Change Technology Conference (www.cctc2009.ca)

Theme 3 – Disaster Risk Management

21-24 June 2009, Toronto, Canada
19th World Conference on Disaster Management
Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness www.wcdm.org

22-24 June 2009, Istanbul, Turkey
Earthquake & Tsunami
World Council of Civil Engineers,
European Council of Civil Engineers and
Turkish Chamber of Civil Engineers
www.imo.org.tr/eqt2009

3 Sept. 2009, Fukuoka, Japan
3rd Joint International Symposium on
Disaster Risk Management

WFEO Meetings and Events

1 Nov. 2009, Kuwait City, Kuwait
WFEO-CEE Face-to-Face Meeting No. 2

2-6 Nov. 2009, Kuwait City, Kuwait
WFEO General Assembly