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ARCASIA PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 44TH COUNCIL MEETING

OFFICE BEARERS 2024-2025

Thank you ARCASIA Council for appointing me as ARCASIA President 2024-25. I hope I am able to fulfill your trust and confidence in me. 2024 has been a challenging but crucial term.

President
Ar. Saifuddin Ahmad
 Malaysia

The first task like any other President is the customary Handover Ceremony and 1st OB/CC meeting for the new Council year. Personally, I would like to thank PAM President 2023-24 Ar. Abu Zarim Abu Bakar and PAM Council 2023-24 for supporting and hosting the Handover Ceremony and 1st OB/CC meeting which was held at PAM Centre on 20th January 2024.

Vice President (Zone A)
Ar. Devendra Nath Gongal
 Nepal

Vice President (Zone B)
Ar. Saykham Thammanosouth
 Laos

During the 1st OB/CC meeting, I shared my vision and mission and my expectations with my OB and CC for the Council term.

Vice President (Zone C)
Ar. Thomas Cheung
 Hong Kong

Immediate Past President
Ar. Abu Sayeed M Ahmed
 Bangladesh

My first official function as ARCASIA President was in Jaipur on the invitation of Ar Tushar Sogani for the Jaipur Architecture Festival from 2nd – 3rd February. I took part in sessions 1 on Day 2 of the festival entitled “Digital Craftsmanship – Integrating Technology with Stone in Architectural Design”. It was an interesting topic on how stone, a traditional building material, very popular in Rajasthan, India, is used in the modern construction industry incorporating digital technology, whether the building material is sustainable is enviable.

Honorary Secretary
Ar. Dexter Y.P. Koh
 Malaysia

Honorary Treasurer
Ar. Ridha Razak
 Malaysia

Advisor
Datuk Ar. Tan Pei Ing
 Malaysia

ARCASIA Forum 22 was originally supposed to be held in Kandalama, Sri Lanka from 23rd -28th September 2024. As such, a Pilot Tour was arranged in February to coincide with my attendance as Guest of Honour to SLIA Architect 24. The Inauguration Ceremony was held on 22nd February 2024. For the Pilot Tour, which was held on 23rd February 2024, I was accompanied by my Advisor Ar. Rita Soh. We visited all the proposed venues, especially the Inheritance Hotel, the official venue for Forum 22. On 24th February, a special hybrid meeting was held at SLIA office, attended by ARCASIA OB/CC and SLIA organising committee, headed by President Rohana Bandara Herath and Convenor Russell Dandeniya. Various issues were raised especially on the distance, logistics and transportation. However, President Rohana on behalf of SLIA council assured and gave commitment to host the Forum in Kandalama in September.

Advisor
Ar. Rita Soh
 Singapore

CHAIRS 2024-2025

Committee Chair (ACAE)
Ar. Jonathan Manalad
 Philippines

Committee Chair (ACPP)
Ar. Zhang Wei
 China

Committee Chair (ACSR)
Ar. Farhana Sharmin Emu
 Bangladesh

On 8th March, during my private visit to Seoul, S. Korea, I made a courtesy visit to President Jaerok Kim of KIRA at his office. President Kim officially took office just a few days earlier. I shared with President Kim my vision as President and how KIRA will host ACA 2021 in Incheon in 2025. President Kim gave his assurance and support that KIRA will host ACA21 as scheduled.

Committee Chair (ACGSA)
Ar. Alice Leong
 Malaysia

Committee Chair (ACYA)
Ar. Denny Setiawan
 Indonesia

Chair (Fellowship)
Ar. Debatosh Sahu
 India



On 2nd March, I had the honour to be invited by the publishers to launch the Kuala Lumpur book launch of the book Visionary Architects of Monsoon Asia (VAMA). The book written by Prof. Robert Powell features visionary architects; Võ Trọng Nghĩa from Vietnam, Rene Tan from Singapore, Andra Matin from Indonesia, Duangrit Bunnag from Thailand, and Tan Loke Mun from Malaysia. These architects were originally scheduled to be speakers at the Forum 22 in Kandalama. Unfortunately, they are not featured in this Forum to be held in Colombo for unknown reason. I hope more books featuring architects from ARCASIA Member Institutes are published. ARCASIA architects' works need to be visible globally.

On 9th April, UIA President Regina Gonthier and Sec. Gen. Rui Leão held a Zoom meeting with Presidents of ACE, FPAA, AUA and ARCASIA. UIA spoke about the various MoUs signed with the various organizations including ARCASIA. UIA and ARCASIA had 3 MoUs signed, 2006 in Beijing, 2011 in Danang and 2016 in Hong Kong. We also discussed working bodies on various thematic areas:

Thematic areas 1: Education

Thematic areas 2: Professional Practice

Thematic areas 3: Sustainability

I stressed that ARCASIA would prefer to work on specific issues rather than signing MoUs to ensure its effectiveness. On the working bodies, ARCASIA Office Bearers agreed for ARCASIA to work on Thematic Area 3: Sustainability. Unfortunately, there is no follow up by UIA on this to date.

On 13th April, ARCASIA Inter-committee SDG Webinar was held. Convener was ARCASIA Zone C VP Ar. Thomas Cheung and speakers were from the various Committee Chairs of ACAE, ACGSA, ACPP, ACSR and ACYA. The webinar intent was to find the way forward for developing our Asian approach on SDGs. The Committee Chairs shared their perspective on how their committees address, implement and promote these SDGs so that ARCASIA can conclude to develop some guidelines to move on.

On 18th April, I attended an online Architect's Council of Europe (ACE) Conference on the theme Sharing Common Values: Internationalisation of the Architectural Profession and the New European Bauhaus. The conference was held in Brussels. The other regional presidents who attended were Mr. Donatien Kasseyet Kalume (AUA) and Mr. Gerardo Montaruli Montarali (FPAA). I participated in a roundtable discussion together with ACE President on common international values for achieving quality & built environment.

ASA invited ARCASIA OB/CC to their annual National Convention, the Architects 24 Expo. ARCASIA OB/CC held the meeting in Bangkok on May 1st, 2024. A day before on 30th April, ASA organised a Presidential Forum to discuss on the topic "Supporting and Promoting the Young Architects". For this forum, ASA invited representatives from 15 ARCASIA Member Institutes of which include ASA as host. It was almost a full ARCASIA attendance and it was interesting to hear views from the various representatives. Hope ASA will share the full outcome with all ARCASIA Member Institutes.

On 8th June, I was honoured to be invited by the President of American Institute of Architects to receive the AIA Presidential Medal and Honorary AIA Membership. I also participated in the International Presidents' Forum with other invited Presidents of Architect Associations. During the forum, topics discussed were on issues faced by cities in our region, i.e. whether there are official roles like Chief Architect in local governments,



how architects shape local policies, how architects create positive change in communities, and ways to elevate the role of architects within communities. During the AIA Convention, I had an informal meeting with the President of RIBA where we discussed on issues of mutual interest related to the profession. An informal meeting was also held with the representative of KIRA, Gibson Rhie, to discuss on preparation of ACA 21.

Sometime in July, I was contacted by SLIA President Rohana regarding the organisation of Forum 22 in Kandalama. He informed that the National Presidential will be held sometime near the date of the forum and that SLIA was worried that there might be security problems. Many calls and WhatsApp communications transpired, including Emergency Meeting with SLIA on 4th Aug.

Finally, an Emergency Council Meeting was held online on 11th Aug to discuss the situation and postponement of Forum 22. Council finally agreed to postpone Forum 22 to a later date. SLIA finally confirmed on the new Forum 22 date to be held on 13th - 19th Jan 2025 after the meeting between Office Bearers and SLIA on 26th Aug.

During Kuala Lumpur Architectural Festival from 3rd - 6th July, PAM hosted ARCASIA OB/CC meeting on 4th July. There were also parallel events by ACGSA and ACYA.

On 24th September, Fellowship organised the long-overdue Memorial Symposium for the late Past Chairman Syed Zaigham S. Jaffery. It was moderated by Fellowship Chairman Debatosh Sahu. Speakers were Ar. Ejaz Ahed of IAP and Ar. Shamsul Wares of IAB, ARCASIA Past President Ar. Rita Soh, and ARCASIA Past Chairman Ar. Surath Wickramasinghe. In my speech, I spoke about the Fellowship's need to organise symposiums with Chairmen/Presidents and senior members of ARCASIA who are still around to share the knowledge of ARCASIA during their tenure. I hope to start with Past Chairman Lim Chong Keat soon.

The Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) Odisha Chapter organised a successful inaugural international conference dedicated to women architects entitled "Pink Print: Contributions and Challenges" on the 8th - 10th Nov. I strongly support this event and shared my views on gender equality... in fact, my two Advisors are women! I hope other Member Institutes will follow suit in organising such events. President Vilas Avachat of IIA mentioned that IIA will make it an annual event. I also took the opportunity to meet IIA Council Members there.

UIA held the Forum24 in Kuala Lumpur, 15th - 19th Nov. PAM successfully hosted the event. I was invited as ARCASIA President by UIA. During the Forum, I participated with other regional organisations in a discussion with UIA President and Sec General. Topic discussed was on Natural Disasters. I informed that ARCASIA has formed ARCASIA Emergency Architects which trained architects in addressing natural disasters and ARCASIA is more than willing to work on these areas. Ar. Joseph Kwan also attended this discussion. I also reminded UIA on the earlier agreement to work on Thematic Area of Sustainability. However, UIA was silent on the matter. During this Forum, KIRA also took the opportunity to discuss on their preparation for ACA 21. KIRA was represented by Convener Donghee Oh and Gibson Rhie while Office Bearers were represented by Advisor Tan Pei Ing, Hon Sec Dexter Koh and myself.

End of November and early December were hectic times for me. From 28th - 29th Nov I was invited to attend JIA Convention 2024 Beppu. On 29th Nov I participated in an International Presidents' Forum. Other participants were Presidents from AIA, ASA, KIRA,




KIA, SIA and JIA. It was a good and informative forum on “How Architects should be procured for Public Buildings”. During the Reception Party, I gave a speech on the topic of “Future of Architecture”, which was the theme of the convention.

From 1st - 4th Nov, I attended events organised by IAP and EAROPH International in Islamabad. EAROPH International/EAROPH Pakistan had organised the 29th EAROPH World Congress. ARCASIA Past President, Jahangir Khan formally took over as President of Earoph International. However, I missed the handing-over ceremony which was held on 1st Dec 2024. On 4th Dec, I attended the awards ceremony of the IAP Architecture Awards where I was one of the jurors.

From Islamabad, I attended "Archibuild Expo 2024" in Kathmandu from 6th - 7th Dec. I gave a speech on behalf of ARCASIA and what ARCASIA can do to promote students' activities. I also took the opportunity to meet SONA Office Bearers and some senior members. Whenever there are opportunities, I would like to meet first hand with Institute members and have dialogue with them to discuss issues affecting the institute members and others affecting the profession in general.

Overall, for 2024, we conducted six OB meetings, including four OB/CC meetings, one OB Emergency meeting, and one Emergency Council Meeting. Additionally, we held numerous discussions with SLIA regarding Forum 22. The Committee and Fellowship Chairpersons are responsible to fulfill their duties and activities and reporting to their committee.

Reported by,



Ar. Saifuddin Ahmad
President

