

Closing address by Mr. Nobuyoshi Aikawa, President,
Japan Ship Technology Research Association (JSTRA)
at the 7th ASEF (November 8, 2013)

My name is Nobuyoshi Aikawa, and I am from the Japan Ship Technology Research Association. On behalf of the organizers, I would like to say a few words to mark the end of the 7th Asian Shipbuilding Experts' Forum (ASEF).

I would like to thank everyone for all their hard work at this event. I believe our discussions over the past two days have further deepened the friendships and mutual understanding that we as Asian shipbuilders enjoy.

The 7th ASEF may have come to an end, but this also marks a new beginning for us all.

Six years have passed since the first ASEF event was held in Tokyo in 2007. The first three years of this period represented the initial phase of the ASEF's history, during which focus was placed on organizing the event to facilitate member exchanges. The subsequent three years represented the second phase, during which Correspondence Groups were established at the 2010 ASEF in Kyoto. This created a structure for the discussion of specific topics on an ongoing basis rather than only during the annual Forum. Based on this structure, we've discussed the IMO-NGO issue and other topics in earnest.

The foundations for another phase have been laid here at the 7th ASEF in Kobe – a phase that will move us toward the establishment of a new ASEF. At this meeting, member countries began discussions on articles of incorporation for the future of the ASEF. We must maintain our efforts to complete this work.

As an engineer deeply involved in shipbuilding, I sincerely hope that our collective expertise in the field will be appropriately used to support world maritime safety and marine environment protection. I believe you all share my feelings on this. To this end, we must make steady progress in our efforts to establish a structure for a new ASEF.

In conclusion, I hope the ASEF will successfully chart a course toward its destination on this new voyage for the future. Thank you.