

ICWES20

Closing Address · Words of Thanks

Dr Sarah Peers

President, International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists (INWES)

ICWES20, Clark, Pampanga, Philippines

Closing Address — Thank You, PTC-WEN

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to PTC-WEN for this conference. Your dedication, your careful planning, and your commitment to bringing together professionals and researchers in our field have carried forward the legacy of ICWES and created a truly valuable platform for meaningful exchange and collaboration. It has been a warm and impactful event.

I should also admit that I am leaving with a considerable amount of work ahead of me.

I heard the Calls to Collaborate. From the Youth Empowerment Workshop — my thanks to Vicky and Mary, Sylvia and Shun Lien — and from sessions right across the program, I have filled pages with ideas for INWES projects and program. I also took careful note of the names behind those ideas, because I am confident, they will make excellent volunteers.

As always, I have met wonderful people here: new acquaintances and old friends alike. Please do stay in touch after the conference; I would be delighted to hear from you. And to anyone at this event who now wishes to become involved with INWES, applications are warmly welcomed, and I would encourage you to come forward.

More seriously, INWES needs to hear from all women in and of STEM. From those at the start of their careers and those with decades behind them. From engineering, science, construction, manufacturing, processing, digital technologies, health sciences, agriculture — and from the social sciences too. From every role and every generation. Membership is not a prerequisite. Our members join not for themselves, but to be part of a global community and to support all STEM women.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to convene international conferences, for many reasons. My own flight was held on the ground for some hours because of closed airspace, a consequence of conflict elsewhere in the world. And yet meeting in person remains an experience of exceptional richness, and one we do not wish to lose. At the same time, we recognize that we must continue to widen access through virtual participation. Our former Vice-President (Conferences), Shun Lien Sung, has initiated discussions on precisely this question, and the new Board will carry that work forward.

There are two matters that give me personal sadness. Jung Sun Kim, our President from 2021 to 2023, is no longer serving on the Board. And I will miss all the 2024–2026 Directors

who are now stepping down — every one of them. I am glad, however, that Jane Tapel continues with us.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the organizing committee and to PTC-WEN — Jane, Jhoanna Soriano, Evelyn Laurito, Nonette, the very aptly named Star (Estrellita Bordallo), and the many others who are too numerous to name — for their hard work and attention to detail in making this conference a success. Your efforts created an engaging and enriching environment for every participant, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been part of it.

You are all stars. Viva las Filipinas!

Thank you.

Dr Sarah Peers

President, INWES Aug. 6th , 2026