During the opening ceremony of the 23rd ICID Congress, politicians and officials from different nations got together to explain how important it is to make joint efforts that take the world towards a path of irrigation and drainage modernization for a new green revolution, which is the main topic of this event.

On October 9th, Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto opened the 23rd edition of the International Congress on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) that is taking place in our country for a second time. The event’s host was Roberto Ramirez de la Parra, General Director of the Mexican National Water Commission, who addressed the audience that included Mexico City’s Governor Miguel Angel Mancera; Mexican Secretary of the Environment and Natural Resources Rafael Pacchiano Alaman; International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage President Saeed Naiziri; International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage Secretary-General Avinash Tyagi; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Land and Water Division Deputy Director Olcay Unver; World Bank Group, Water Global Practice Senior
Director Guangzhe Chen; and Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Special Advisor on Water Tony Slatyer. This time around, the congress’ subject matter is the Modernization of Irrigation and Drainage towards a New Green Revolution. In that regard, Ramirez de la Parra stated that water is the element that links food and the environment, and that is the reason why it is necessary to “develop techniques that allow producing what we need while we preserve our natural resources.” The second objective is to find solutions to put an end to hunger; a difficult challenge, mentioned Ramirez de la Parra, “as in order to meet the demand for food of almost 10 billion people by 2050, production has to increase 50 per cent.”

To meet these challenges, it is crucial to have a more efficient use of water and achieve the greatest productivity by using the least amount of blue gold, the name given to this water resource by the official. Mexico is ranked six on irrigation infrastructure worldwide, said Ramirez de la Parra, and this administration has made important efforts to modernize the hydraulic infrastructure of the Mexican irrigated zones, as well as to rehabilitate the electromechanical equipment in pumping wells at a national level to reduce the energy consumption. Furthermore, waste water it’s been used for irrigation purposes in more than 70 thousand hectares across the country.

Meanwhile, Food and Agriculture Organization of
the United Nations, Land and Water Division Deputy Director Olcay Ünver, who is representing FAO’s Director-General, emphasized on the importance of making appropriate and nutritious food available to all, and that we need to take advantage of the natural resources to do this, striving towards a sustainable development.

FAO’s strategic objective, he said, provides an “holistic framework, setting sustainable patterns to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition” because – as he mentioned today at the congress – food insecurity and malnutrition are increasing at an alarming rate.

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Special Advisor on Water Tony Slatyer spoke about how important it is to help water users and governments to make better decisions in terms of water management.

World Bank Group, Water Global Practice Senior Director Guangzhe Chen stated that, to face these challenges, the World Bank is investing more than six billion dollars around the world in more than 70 projects in
25 countries for irrigation purposes. Moreover, another three billion dollars will be invested in the next two years. Conversely, Mexico City Governor Miguel Angel Mancera spoke about the challenges of drainage in the Mexican capital city and congratulated the work been done by the Mexican National Water Commission (CONAGUA) after the September 19’s Earthquake. Mancera also mentioned that there are ongoing works in water treatment plants as to provide better water consumption options in the city. Finally, International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage President Saeed Naiziri said that it is necessary to work on this initiative on a global basis as to enable all the stakeholders’ involvement via food security goals.
HERITAGE IRRIGATION STRUCTURES

“LA BOQUILLA” DAM IN CHIHUAHUA AND “CHINAMPAS” IN XOCHIMILCO

ICID keeps a listing of structures considered as irrigation heritage for their historical interest, their contribution to civilizations, and the development of irrigation agriculture. The purpose of recognizing structures as irrigation heritage is learning about the history and evolution of irrigation around the world, recognizing its contributions, philosophy, and the structures’ technology, as well as preserving their history. To be listed as an irrigation heritage landmark, it should be an ancient structure of over 100 years old – including irrigation dams, water storage facilities, water bypass structures, canals, agricultural drainage structures or any other site or structure related to agricultural water use. The criteria consider the structure’s technological advancement and its contribution to developing agriculture, its innovative nature, its contribution to engineering theories and practices, consideration of environmental aspects, and its print in the cultural traditions of ancient civilizations. These structures are classified in two lists – one includes those that are still functional or operating and the other that only considers those listed as having a historical or documentary value. During this year’s opening ceremony of ICID’s 23rd International Congress on Irrigation and Drainage, an award was given to La Boquilla Dam, located in the Mexican state of Chihuahua, and the chinampa sub-irrigation system in Xochimilco, which was received by Mexico’s President, Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto. Thanks to its storage capacity, La Boquilla was known as one of the Americas’ biggest dams. Its construction started the development of the Delicias Agricultural Valley – one of the most productive valleys – and is still fully functional even after 100 years constructed. On the other hand, the Chinampa Sub-Irrigation System in Xochimilco is an ancient agricultural production system that is still being used in the southern area of Mexico City. It provides food, work and support to preserve natural resources as it is a natural barrier against the growing urban sprawl. As of this day, both structures are considered international heritage irrigation structures.
The KRC (Korea Rural Community Corporation, CEO Mr. Jeong Sung) is conducting information of KRC's technical issues and promotes overseas projects through exhibition booth on OLMECA hall 2 in WTC of Mexico city.

KRC is the Korea's best state-owned corporation founded by government, which is established for happy rural communities. KRC has been creating new agricultural and fishery values through building water facilities and researching policies for rural communities since 1908 and it has started overseas projects since 1967. KRC Creates and manages irrigation facilities for a stable growth for agriculture accumulated over 100 years. The world's longest Saemangeum sea-dike is listed in Guinness World Records as the world's longest 33.9-kilometer sea-dike.

Moreover, various projects are underway, The Improvement of drainage system, Maintenance, Facility renovation etc., to protect the people who lives rural area from rapid climate changes, such as droughts and floods.

The highlight of this exhibition booth is The Smart Water System which present the big data such as drought, flood, typhoon and earthquakes with rural-water facilities information. Thanks to this system, it is possible to manage not only rural-water efficiently and control water facilities in distance, also, safety inspection and real-time CCTV monitoring etc., KRC has exported this system to foreign countries such as Iran and Thailand, helping to improve the country's farming activities.

Also, the KRC has completed 140 overseas projects since 1967. Bolivia and El Salvador projects in Latin America have been completed, constructing dam & irrigation facilities and electorinic solar pannel etc.

KRC's move to the Central and South America is attracting keen attention.
We invite you to attend to the Latin-American and the Caribbean meeting on Irrigation and Drainage that will take place on Wednesday, October 11th at the TOLTECA meeting room starting at 9 am. Experts from eight countries of Latin-America and the Caribbean will be participating, namely: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic and Costa Rica.

LATIN AMERICAN MEETING

We invite you to attend to the Latin-American and the Caribbean meeting on Irrigation and Drainage that will take place on Wednesday, October 11th at the TOLTECA meeting room starting at 9 am. Experts from eight countries of Latin-America and the Caribbean will be participating, namely: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic and Costa Rica.

IRRIGATION DISTRICT 023
SAN JUAN DEL RÍO, QUERETARO

This tour will give you a comprehensive understanding of the administration and operation of a typical Mexican irrigation district, including its hydraulic structures and farms. The Irrigation District 023 is located in the central part of the country, in the zone known as “El Bajío”, which includes part of the states of Aguascalientes, Jalisco, Guanajuato and Queretaro. This zone has significant economic and cultural importance since the time of the Spanish viceroyalty, mainly due the mining activity, which propitiated the growth of population settlements, as well as the development of agricultural and livestock activity. At present, the San Juan del Río area, where the Irrigation District 023 is located, is an important industrial corridor, with national and multinational corporations, which promote the economic development of the region.

The Irrigation District 023 dominates an area of 11,835 hectares of which 9,373 are irrigable, distributed amongst 2,625 producers. The sources for irrigation are dams with a total capacity surrounding 115 thousand m3, and 55 wells distributed in the irrigation zone. The main crops are maize, sorghum, alfalfa, barley and wheat. The irrigation district faces a high pressure for the water due to the growing demand for urban and industrial use. The visit will expose the problem and how it is being solved, either through the exchange of water uses, and its more efficient use through the technification of greenhouses. Agropark is an agro industrial park, with 295 hectares of land, of which 180 correspond to greenhouses, generating 2,400 jobs. Nowadays, 11 national and international agricultural companies operate in the park, with an annual production of 81 thousand tons, of which 65% are different tomato varieties and 35% pepper and cucumber. Ninety five percent of the total production is exported to the United States and Canada. Villa Vivé by Freixenet Mexico, in the vineyard zone of Queretaro, offers its exquisite wines and invites to live a wine tourism experience with a guided tour of 45 minutes, through the cellars 25 meters deep, and an explanation and tasting of the method of elaboration of sparkling wines. This tour will take place on October 14-15.

CHINAMPAS IN XOCHIMILCO

Learn all about the famous ancient Aztec floating farms known as chinampas, which are constructed by excavating lake sediments, and creating a system of islets separated by channels. The chinampa has been a traditional land-use practice in the Valley of Mexico since Pre-Hispanic times and is considered a historical sustainable agricultural system based on the efficient use of farming technologies and resource management strategies for horticulture and floriculture production. The villages, that maintain chinampas as farming activity, are located in wetlands of Xochimilco and Tlahuac, counties located at south of Mexico City, featuring a small lake—reminiscent of the great Aztec-era lake system—where traditional trajineras (punt boats of sorts) cruise along scenic waterways surrounded by lush vegetation. For its historical and cultural value, in December 1984, the chinampa zone was declared by UNESCO, a Cultural Humanity Heritage and in 2004, Chinampa’s area was declared RAMSAR site by the convention on wetlands. This tour will take place on October 12.

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