

Draft Joint Communiqué
Of 14th ACFIF (Asian Chemical Fiber Industries Federation) Conference

May 23-24, 2024
Seoul, Republic of Korea

The Asian Chemical Fiber Industries Federation(ACFIF) Conference commenced in 1996 and brings together nine members representing chemical fiber producers in Asia. The ACFIF plays a significant role in the global chemical fiber market, the textile market and across industries, contributing to the production of 90% of the world's chemical fiber.

Recently it is becoming increasingly evident that the world is facing a number of significant challenges in the form of extreme weather events. These include droughts in some countries and floods in others, as well as the impact of global warming. These issues are no longer confined to individual or national boundaries, but a global problem that we must address together. It is clear that we cannot afford to wait any longer, and that we must work together to overcome this challenge.

In response to these concerns, governments and the international community are exploring ways to achieve carbon neutrality through setting global standards and cooperation. It would also be beneficial to consider the challenges facing our chemical fiber industry.

So here were all nine Asian countries representing the chemical fiber industry of Asia have gathered under the theme of "Cooperation for Sustainable Growth" to share common views on future and way to moving forward.

During the conference, the new board appointments were approved. We are pleased to announce that Mr. Hae Sang Jeon, Chairman of the Korea Chemical Fibers Association (KCFA), has succeeded Mr. Mitsuo Ohya, President of the Japan Chemical Fibers Association (JCFA), as the new Chairman of ACFIF. Furthermore, we are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Tan Thian Poh, President of the Malaysian Textile Manufacturers Association (MTMA), as Vice-Chairman of ACFIF, and Mr. Jin Gyu Kim (Vice Chairman of KCFA) as Secretary General of ACFIF.

The conference was also delighted to welcome Mr. Ja Geun Koo, Member of the National Assembly and member of the Special Committee on Advanced Strategic Industries who kindly gave a speech and expressed supports for the chemical fiber industry. We were also

honoured to have Mr. Kyung Sung Kang, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy attend the conference and appreciate the efforts of the industry towards being more sustainable.

The 14th ACFIF Conference was successfully held on May 23 and 24, 2024, with all nine ACFIF members in attendance (China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and South Korea) with around 200 participants.

The following is a summary of the highlights of the 14th ACFIF Conference.

1. On the first day of the conference, each member was invited to present a report on the situation in their country or region. They were encouraged to provide an overview of the current status of their country or region's chemical fiber industry and to outline their sustainability initiatives, with a view to fostering constructive discussions.
2. Mr. Hoe Sung Lee, President of CF Alliance, Former Chair of IPCC, gave a speech in which he discussed the importance of accelerating and equitable action in mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts. He suggested that this can be achieved through effective governance, clear goals, and inclusive governance processes. He also highlighted the need for accelerated climate action through finance, technology, and international cooperation during day one.
3. Our esteemed guest speaker, Mr. Frédéric Van Houte, Director General of CIRFS, addressed a number of crucial topics related to EU chemical policy, including the Restriction of Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC), the Industrial Emissions Directive, and climate change legislation. He also touched upon the Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and the Digital Product Passport (DPP), which aim to facilitate the EU's transition into a fair and prosperous society.
4. On the second day, in sessions to report on special themes, in-depth reports and animated discussions took place regarding the challenges summarized in the position paper.
5. Our esteemed guest speaker, Mr. Andreas Engelhardt, President of The Fiber Year GmbH, presented some intriguing statistics on the supply and demand of textiles in Europe and the US. He expressed his concern that the current challenges in the industry may persist in the near term, but expressed hope for a unified approach that could foster a more conducive environment for the textile industry.

6. The ACFIF members believe that promoting eco-friendly materials through awareness campaigns, incentives, partnerships, and regulations could be beneficial. Certifications for recycled textiles include Recycled Claim Standard (RCS), Global Recycled Standard (GRS), OEKO-TEX® STeP, Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), and Bluesign®.
7. In recent years, there has been a notable advancement in the development of AI, and various technologies using AI have been developed in the textile industry. From automatic PTA feeding machines using software such as DCS and MES to packing and inventory management, Smart AI has the potential to enhance factory efficiency from the beginning to the end of the industry for helping reducing carbon emissions, and in the recycling process to achieve a circular economy. Materials, contents, and color can be automatically sorted by smart AI to save time and effort, which could be beneficial in improving overall efficiency and much easier.
8. It would be beneficial to promote fair competition through FTAs and trade agreements, to secure customer trust through standards, and to impose a penalty unfair competitors. Furthermore, it would be advantageous to ensure global competitiveness by adhering to global standards such as worker safety and minimum wages.
9. Responding to protectionism driven by Western nations by collaborating and acting as a hub for green products without over-competing, as 81% of the 2024 new consumers (emerging consumers) are coming from Asian markets. By consolidating standards and establishing regulations with Asia at the center, rather than the EU or the West, we should create an atmosphere of Asian hands-on involvement in green textiles.
10. Support the development and investment of differentiated high-value-added apparel stabilize materials and high-performance high-tech materials away from traditional apparel materials such as polyester, nylon, and acrylic, and focus on the high-performance high-tech materials industry to the material supply chain and expand market share in the global market.
11. All 9 members of ACFIF have challenges to achieve a circular economy. We need action from the material stage. We believe that the final path to a circular economy in textiles is to achieve fiber to fiber recycling.
From last conference in Japan to this conference in Korea, we have set tasks for the Asian chemical fiber industry to achieve a sustainable society. We are working to

achieve these tasks, including efforts to develop technology for PET recycling and establish a recycling system, which we hope will contribute to the expansion of textile recycling and reduction of textile waste through the development of fiber to fiber recycling technology. We also hope that our efforts will contribute to eco-friendly policies through CO2 reduction, microplastics reduction, and response to chemical substance regulations.

In light of these considerations, we have decided to pursue collaboration in the construction of an efficient production system through the joint efforts of Asian chemical producers. This will entail the use of global supply chains, which will be differentiated according to national requirements (waste collection and recycling systems, recycling technologies, and product technologies).

12. The ACFIF members also agreed with the call to rekindle the meaning of conference in accordance with Honorary Chairman Dr. Maeda's idea, founder of ACFIF, suggesting that we might consider moving forward with real, practical, collective action by ongoing consultations and information exchange.
13. The 15th ACFIF Conference will be hosted by MTMA and is scheduled to take place Malaysia in **May** of 2026.