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June 11, 2024

Professor Dr. Rainer Horn

Chair of IUSS Presidential Election Standing Committee

Subject: Letter of Support for Dr. Renfang Shen's Application for IUSS President-elect

Dear Professor Dr. Rainer Horn:

I am delighted to write this letter in support of Dr. Renfang Shen's candidacy for IUSS President-elect (2025~2026). He is an outstanding candidate whose professional achievements fully align with the criteria for IUSS President. Thus, I strongly support his nomination with enthusiasm.

I have had the privilege of knowing Dr. Shen both professionally and personally for over twenty years, through scientific conferences and social gatherings. During our interactions, Dr. Shen and I have engaged in discussions about advancing soil science, not only in Asia but on a global scale. His dedication and contributions to this field are firsthand experiences that I am pleased to highlight.

I place significant value on four essential virtues for the roles of IUSS President, drawing from my tenure as the former IUSS President: Scientific Achievement, Leadership, Decisiveness and Personality.

Scientific Achievement: Dr. Shen is an exceptional soil scientist renowned for his expertise in the utilization of plant nutrients and sustainable management of acidic soils. With close to four decades of dedicated research, Dr. Shen has significantly contributed to fields such as soil improvement, prevention of soil acidification, productivity enhancement, and remediation of soil pollution. His extensive body of work underscores his commitment to advancing soil science globally. His profound impact on soil science is evidenced by his numerous publications and innovative approaches to tackling critical challenges in agricultural and environmental sustainability.

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Leadership: Dr. Shen's leadership credentials are exemplary. He served as the President of the Soil Science Society of China for eight years (2012~2020) and continues to hold the esteemed position of Honorary President post-2020. Additionally, Dr. Shen fulfills the role of Director General at the Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences, institutions renowned globally for their size and scientific achievements.

Decisiveness: Colleagues from China consistently praise Dr. Shen for his innate ability to swiftly and accurately make decisions, whether in steering scientific directions or resolving administrative issues during his tenure as Chairman. His knack for making sound judgments at critical junctures has been instrumental in the success of the organizations he has led.

Personality: Dr. Shen's interpersonal skills are exceptional, characterized by a warm personality and the ability to establish excellent rapport with everyone he encounters. His approachable demeanor and genuine interest in others foster strong relationships and a positive working environment. Dr. Shen has earned the trust and respect of members within China and across the East and Southeast Asia Federation of Soil Science Societies (ESAFS) through transparent communication and consistent actions.

Based on these criteria, I enthusiastically endorse Dr. Renfang Shen's candidacy for IUSS President-elect (2025~2026). His exemplary record in scientific achievement, leadership, decisiveness, and personality uniquely qualifies him for this esteemed position. I am confident that Dr. Shen possesses the necessary qualities to lead IUSS with distinction and make significant contributions to the field of soil science globally.

Sincerely yours,

Jae Yang

Professor Emeritus of Soil Science

Kangwon National University

Former President and Honorary Member of IUSS