

Prof. Christine Amory-Mazaudier

CEGIST Programme Report 5

Prof. Christine Amory-Mazaudier, a professor of Space Physics at the Université Pierre et Marie Curie (UPMC), Paris, France visited Nigeria in fulfilment of her task of making space weather closer and more friendly to people in developing countries. She was hosted at the National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA), Abuja where she was scheduled to present papers on space weather research in Africa. In addition, she visited some institutions for discussions and interactions in a bid to initiate collaborations between UMPC/CNRS, France and such Universities. FUTA was one of the chosen Universities to host the renowned scholar and versatile giant in the area of space weather and its applications. The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD), FUTA Chapter and Centre for Gender Issues in Science and Technology (CEGIST) received Prof. Christine Amory-Mazaudier as she shared a few thoughts with FUTA women in an interactive forum titled: “*Women in science: the European perspective*” on Friday February 1, 2013 from 9 am in CEGIST Conference Room.

Prof. Mrs. Ibiyinka Fuwape, President of OWSD FUTA Chapter, welcomed the guest and gave a brief introduction on how OWSD-FUTA Chapter started and grew into a formidable Chapter of goal-oriented women in FUTA. The Ag. Director of CEGIST thereafter introduced the host Centre and its activities towards achieving gender mainstreaming and building sound minds amongst students.

Prof. Christine’s talk was divided into three main parts: topics of research and training in space physics, network structure and the role of women in an International Geophysics. Highlights of the interactive forum included a vivid description of space research focus. In her lucid presentation, Prof. Christine showed startling data on the under-representation of women in science even in France and Europe in general. The evidence led to the Law of June 6, 2000 in support of the drive towards Gender Equality. She emphasized the need for “laboratory without borders” as a means of mainstreaming gender in traditionally non-female disciplines. She also highlighted how support funding from international projects such as the “International Space Weather Initiative” had assisted women in their research works. Clear improvements have been recorded in reducing the wide gender gap. For example, from 12.5% females embarking on PhD studies before 2009, 23.5% enrolled in 2012 and in Egypt, the enrolment is even higher (46.9%). She concluded her talk with advice that “in order to build a new world that is gender balanced, we need to think differently”.