

Comstech News



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OIC MINISTERIAL STANDING COMMITTEE ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION

From Coordinator General's Desk



Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary
H.I.S.J., T.I.
Mustafa Prize Laureate

The 24th Conference of the Foreign Ministers, held in Nouakchott Mauritania, had ended on renewed commitment to

work towards the peace, and prosperity in OIC region, by promoting sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic development through innovative approaches, inter-Islamic cooperation, and applications of emerging technologies. It was also resolved to act collectively to meet the enduring and emerging challenges, such as poverty, illiteracy, food insecurity, impact of climate change, and islamophobia.

In the inaugural speeches of the CFM, Excellency the Foreign Minister of Pakistan Mr. Bilawal Bhutto (Chair of the 48th CFM), and Secretary General Excellency Hissein Brahimi Taha have praised the central role of the Islamabad based COMSTECH (Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the OIC) in science based socioeconomic development of the OIC region. In general, there was growing realization of the stature and importance of science and technology in solving the problems which Muslim world faces today.

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Thirty-First Executive Committee Meeting of COMSTECH

The Thirty-First Executive Committee meeting of COMSTECH was held in a hybrid format on September 28, 2022 at the President's Secretariat, Islamabad. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan in his capacity as the Chairman of COMSTECH. The Meeting was also attended by His Excellency the Secretary

General OIC and six Ministers from the OIC member states.

The meeting started with the recitation from the Holy Quran, followed by the opening remarks by H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan / Chairman COMSTECH. He welcomed the participants and said that COMSTECH is leading the S&T Agenda of the OIC in the member

states. He highlighted the importance of promoting science, technology, and innovation for the progress and prosperity of the Muslim world.

H.E. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude to H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahimi Taha, the Secretary General of OIC and the Ministers

for their gracious participation in the meeting.

The Secretary General OIC expressed his gratitude to the President of Pakistan for convening the Thirty-first Executive Committee meeting of COMSTECH. He conveyed his thanks and appreciation to the President of Pakistan for his patronage of

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COMSTECH Funds Science Projects and Fellowships Jointly with ICGEB

COMSTECH and International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), Trieste, Italy jointly funded five research grants and six fellowships to the researchers from OIC member states, worth 52.65 million rupees.

Researchers from Cameroon, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia have been granted fellowships of 3 to 10 months long duration, which will be hosted by Hungary, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Italy.

The research projects submitted by researchers from Algeria, Iran, Kuwait, Malaysia and Pakistan

have been given research grants worth 20,000 Euro each.

The research projects include: Over expression of rate-limiting enzymes, DBTNBT and DBAT, in Taxus cell suspension culture using CRISPR-Cas9 system as a successful strategy for a substantial increase in Taxol, New 4-substituted Pyrazolidine and Isoxazolidine as potential antimicrobial agents, Insights into the resistome of healthy and mastitis camel milk microbiome, Synthesis and heat transport mechanism of biodiesel from marine macroalgae feed stocks catalyzed by activated palm kernel shell waste towards

biofuel standard specification, and Optimizing root system architecture to improve phosphorus use efficiency in rice.

COMSTECH and ICGEB entered into a scientific program agreement in April 2022 to establish a general framework for cooperation in science, education and technology, to facilitate and strengthen collaboration between COMSTECH and ICGEB in the fields of common interest. The main components of this program are: research grants, visiting scientist scheme and fellowship scheme.

COMSTECH is an OIC Ministerial

Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, works for socio-economic development of OIC member states through the application of science, technology and innovation, whereas the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) is an intergovernmental organization and its operations are aligned to those of the United Nations common system. It operates as a centre of excellence for research, training and technology transfer to industry to promote sustainable global development. ♦

International Conference on Science Communication

COMSTECH International Conference/Workshop on "Science Communication and Community Engagement" inaugurated at COMSTECH on Wednesday.

The chief guest of the inaugural session was the honorable Mr. Justice Dr. Syed Muhammad Anwer, Acting Chief Justice of

Federal Shariat Court of Pakistan. He said that being a Muslim, to acquire knowledge and to educate ourselves and our future generations is our religious duty and to fulfill this duty, Science Communication, which is considered as the practice of informing, educating and raising

awareness of science related topics in a community is not only the need of the time but our religious duty too.

He said the holy Quran is not a book of science but guides to live in harmony with the nature. He said Quran teaches us to explore through scientific research the cosmological

scientific principles and realities about ourselves, the climate and environment around us and the universe in general.

He said that the Quran invites us to pursue scientific research in order to explore the scientific principles of the universe. He said that Allah has given us

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Webinar on Recent Advances in Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy

COMSTECH in collaboration with NAPRECA organized a webinar on recent advances in Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy, on 20th February 2023 online.

The webinar was addressed by three distinguished speakers, Dr. Nahoko Uchiyama, National Institute of Health Sciences, Japan, Dr. Atia-tul-Wahab, Dr. Pnajiwan Center for Molecular Medicine and drug Research, International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, University of Karachi, and Dr. Solomon Derese, Department of Chemistry, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

The topic of Dr. Uchiyama was "Regulator Application of

Quantitative qNMR for Assay in Japanese Pharmacopoeia". She talked about quantitative NMR for standardization of quantitative reagents in the crude drug section of the Japanese pharmacopoeia, qNMR measurements of hygroscopic reagents, Assay of perillaldehyde in perilla herbs based on relative molar sensitivity using a combination of ¹H-qNMR and HPLC/UV, and ISO standardization of qNMR.

The topic of Dr. Atia-tul-Wahab was "Application of Saturation Transfer Difference (STD) - NMR Spectroscopy". She talked about STD-NMR used for SARS-CoV-2 protein and NS5 of Dengue virus.

She said we used drug repurposing approach for the application of new ligand. She said that drug repurposing approach is to identify the new therapeutic indications of already approved drugs, for the treatment of both common and rare diseases. She mentioned that repurposing of drug approach potentially lowers the cost, and reduces the time required for drug discovery and development.

Dr. Wahab said that we found 10 drugs which could be the lead candidates to be further studied as potential antiviral agents. She also mentioned that we found that diclofenac sodium effectively inhibits the activity of dengue virus NS5

polymerase. She concluded that though it has limitations, one of the greatest strength of NMR is its capacity to determine protein-protein and protein-ligand interactions.

Historic of Dr. Solomon Derese was "Structure Elucidation of Natural Products Using NMR Spectroscopy". He talked about the use of NMR spectroscopy to elucidate the structure of organic compounds, and the work flow used for structural elucidation of natural products from biological sources. Dr. Solomon said that chemotaxonomy, biosynthesis, color, UV activity, Rf value, and optical rotation provide very useful information about the determination of the structure of the

natural products. He talked about the instrumental methods for structure elucidation of natural products or organic compounds. He said that NMR is the most comprehensive method for the elucidation of the structure of natural products, but there are many other techniques that one can use to determine the structure of the natural products. He said it is important to get the access to the products and get reliable information about the structural molecule. He also talked about the strategies for elucidating the structure of natural products using NMR, and the steps in interpretation of ¹H NMR data of an unknown compound. ♦

International Workshop on Leishmaniasis in Nairobi

COMSTECH in collaboration with The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) network, Durham University, UK, International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi, and University of Nairobi organized a 3-day workshop on, "Identification of New Lead Compounds and Diagnostic Tools for Leishmaniasis: Concepts, Approaches, and Capacity Building", from February 23 to 25, 2023 at the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

The Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary mentioned that a high number of cases in tropical regions of Africa and Asia both of cutaneous and visceral Leishmaniasis emphasizes the demand to identify the potential drugs from our rich folk medicine and natural resources rather than expensive imported medicine. Leishmaniasis is a vector born

disease-affecting people of more than 97 countries, including Pakistan and Kenya. The growing cases of Leishmaniasis around the globe particularly in African region is a major health challenge, which needs to be addressed as soon as possible. Unfortunately, to date no vaccine is available to treat Leishmaniasis and therefore capacity building to identify new drugs lead is critically important. The event was attended by 50 participants from 12 countries including Kenya, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe, together with resource persons from UK, Argentina, Uruguay, and Pakistan.

The participants appreciated the role of COMSTECH and NTD-Network UK, for the promotion of science and technology in Afro-Asian region. High commissioner of Pakistan in Kenya, Honourable Syeda Saqlain graced the event as Guest of Honor. ♦



A Public Lecture on Challenges, Opportunities, and Future Trends in Engineering Education

COMSTECH organized a public lecture on challenges, opportunities, and future trends in engineering education at COMSTECH on January 23, 2023. The lecture was delivered by Prof. Dr. Sayyed Zahid Qamar, Department of Mechanical Industrial Engineering, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat Oman.

Dr. Qamar started his lecture by saying that long time ago those who sacrificed their sleep, food, family, laughter and other joys of life were called saints, now they are called engineers.

He shared a quotation of G. K. Chesterton "Education is the period during which you are being instructed by somebody, you don't know, about something you don't want to know. He mentioned that hopefully that is not always true but that is the tough task that the instructors have to face.

He said that we definitely know that the engineering contributes significantly to economic wellbeing, social stability, and cultural development of society, and mentioned that engineering also plays an important role in global human development, sustainability, and preservation of the environment. Therefore, there is a huge importance of high quality engineering education.

Dr. Qamar highlighted recent challenges, opportunities and future trends in engineering education. He asked, what is a good engineering education? He said that the target is to produce engineers who can make a meaningful contribution in the face of evolving technology in the society, and suggested the engineers to adjust themselves to the evolving technology and society.

Every field was essentially formed

to get the knowledge and know how to execute thoughts that are necessary for the community to make progress, quoted the president of the national academy of engineering, Dr. Mote Jr.

He suggested to the engineers that to be a really and truly a good engineer, you not just to run the machine you know, but to contribute to the future development and progress of the society.

He informed that today we are witnessing the huge and rapid change and major shifts in global engineering trends. He said that the fundamental question is, are the engineering programs and curricula adapting well to these changes to the requirements of occupational flexibility of engineering graduates or are they adapting well to meet the current and future demands for engineering skills and knowledge.

He said that today's engineers must have a strong mix of technical, professional, and soft skills, that is the core that all engineering institutions must address. They just not only provide technical knowledge but also they must produce professionals with all the required soft skills.

Talking about the curriculum, Dr. Qamar said that in addition to traditional basic courses in mathematics, physics, and chemistry, many engineering programs are now including information and communication technology, biological, social and behavioral sciences, and humanities into their core curriculum.

He informed that according to the ABET report the number of accredited bachelor programs in bioengineering and biomedical engineering in the USA witnessed a



400% increase in the last 15 years. It is just one example that traditional engineering is at one side and the world knows that we are going towards biomaterial and biomedical engineering. He raised the question, do universities in our countries similarly transform for the future?

He emphasized that the engineers are not to be trained only to work in an organization rather they should be trained to create their own business. He said that to develop a range of business, management and other professional skills in addition to the technical competencies to nurture the entrepreneurial mindset.

He emphasized the need for a corporate and national strategy to ramp up the quality and opportunity for lifelong learning for our engineering work-force, and the acquisition of multidisciplinary skills like ICT skills, soft skills, and pedagogical skills.

Dr. Qamar concluded his lecture by suggesting to ask ourselves that what are the challenges that engineering education faces today, what are the new strategies, and requirement, and how can management and policy makers adopt to it. ♦

FROM PAGE 1

From Coordinator General's Desk

We at COMSTECH has been working tirelessly to promote inter Islamic cooperation, institutional linkages, and human capacity in the key fields of science and technology, relevant to national and regional needs. COMSTECH, in close coordination of member states, OIC institutions, and international science organizations, has launched a large number of programs such as the OIC's largest

scholarships/fellowships program including fellowships of Muslim minorities in non-OIC countries, OIC health and S&T Africa initiative in ophthalmology, neurology and clinical trials, training of health care professionals and technicians in key aspects of healthcare services, establishment and strengthening of key institutions in OIC-LDC region, joint programs in climate related issues, profiling of STI performance of member states, as well as country

specific programs. The breadth of these programs can be reviewed on COMSTECH's frequently updated website. Most importantly, majority of the COMSTECH programs are "youth centered" benefitting thousands of young researchers in various fields of science. In this exciting and exhilarating journey of making some difference in the lives of people in OIC region and beyond, member universities of the COMSTECH Consortium of

Excellence (CCoE) are playing a central role for which ever grateful to them.

The annual report of the COMSTECH 2022 (www.comstech.org/publications/) provides glimpses of a huge portfolio of programs and initiatives in priority areas of STI Agenda 2025 and implementations of relevant resolutions of S&T Summit in Kazakhstan and Abu Dhabi and other OIC forums.

The quarterly newsletter of the COMSTECH is issued to share updated information about the COMSTECH achievements and programs. It also includes information about the ongoing and future activities. Please do visit the website and review the newsletters. Your feedback, and suggestions can help COMSTECH team to better serve the community as per mandate of this key OIC institution. ♦



COMSTECH-IFS Research Grants Programme 2022 Grantees

COMSTECH and International Foundation for Science (IFS), Stockholm, started joint program in 1998. The purpose of the collaboration is to enhance research capability in the OIC region.

The joint program is valuable because of the similarity of the mandates and strong common interest in capacity building of the two organizations in the developing countries. The purpose of the collaboration is to enhance research capability within the OIC region, and to reap a rich harvest by obtaining matching grants from IFS (US\$ 0.1 million/year) for OIC scientists and institutions.

This Program has so far financed 394 research projects amounting to US\$ 4.345 million in 32 OIC member states: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somali, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Tunisia and Uganda.♦



Mohsin Gilani
Pakistan



Hicham, Farsi
Morocco



Adebawale, Tolulope
Nigeria



Bello, M. Bashir
Nigeria



Libanio, Daouda
Benin



Adekunle, Latifat
Nigeria



Kdidi, Samia
Tunisia



Baqay, M. Abdulaha-Al
Bangladesh



Mariam, Barro
Burkina Faso



Rafiq, Amna
Pakistan



Abdou Razakou
Niger



Amegnaglo, Kossi
Togo



Fatumah, Nakiguli
Uganda



Mahamadi, Nikiema
Burkina Faso



Babatola, Leye
Nigeria



Abderahim, Ahmadou
Mali



Ntumba, Agnes
Cameroon



Dotchamou, Titilayo
Benin

Thirty-First Executive Committee Meeting of COMSTECH FROM PAGE 1

COMSTECH and for the unwavering support of Pakistan to the OIC STI Agenda 2026. The Secretary General stressed the need to assist the Least Developed African OIC member states and called for COMSTECH to enhance its S&T training programs for Africa.

The Coordinator General COMSTECH thanked the Secretary General OIC for his illuminating statement and assured him of COMSTECH's full support for the Africa program.

The Coordinator General presented the agenda items of the meeting for discussion and approval. There were twelve items in the agenda. Each agenda item was presented by the Coordinator General, and was discussed in detail and then the decision for each item was made.

The adoption of the provisional agenda of the meeting, confirmation of the decisions of thirtieth executive committee meeting of COMSTECH, audit reports, contributions from the member states and approval for expenditure, review of COMSTECH activities implemented, 1st and 2nd OIC summits on science and technology and implementation of the OIC STI Agenda 2026, actions taken by the Coordinator General, report of the Coordinator General on the status of Inter Islamic Networks of COMSTECH, new initiatives and policy guidelines from the Executive Committee, date for holding the sixteenth general assembly meeting of COMSTECH, draft provisional agenda for the sixteenth general assembly meeting of COMSTECH, were the part of the agenda of the meeting.

After the completion of discussions and making decisions on agenda items, the chairman opened the floor for comments and observations on the agenda items. The representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Dr. Munir M. Eldesouki, President of the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) thanked the Chair and COMSTECH for its support ensuring the success of the Executive Committee. He informed the meeting that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has initiated a new policy for STI under the patronage of His Highness Prince Muhammad bin Salman. He stated that the STI strategy would be announced soon by the Kingdom and would be shared with other OIC member states.

The Chairman COMSTECH expressed his thanks to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and drew attention to the impressive efforts to set-up the Neom City for Science and Technology. The Chair also appreciated the efforts of COMSTECH to strengthen the S&T cooperation within the OIC member states, especially the programs for the capacity building of the OIC member states. He also said that I believe the opportunity of online education will open the window for number of least developed countries of the OIC as this is less costly and more efficient. The Executive Committee concluded at 4:30 pm with thanks to H.E. the President of Pakistan / Chairman COMSTECH.♦

COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence Expands to 45 Member Institutions and Growing

COMSTECH launched "COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence (CCoE)" in Sept. 2020, comprising upon key academic, science, technology and engineering research institutions of OIC member countries.

The strategic goals of the CCoE are:

- Create S&T interdependence among OIC states.
- Build capacity in key areas of S&T through exchange programs and Institutional linkages.
- Provide enabling environment to increase investment, and trade through technology-based projects within OIC member countries.
- Build an ecosystem of collaboration and enable knowledge-based economic growth in the OIC Region.

Below is the list of CCoE member institutions.

- International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) University of Karachi, Karachi
- National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Islamabad
- Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences & Technology (GIKI), Swabi
- Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad
- Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Lahore
- National Institute of Health (NIH), Islamabad
- Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology (PINSTECH), Islamabad
- Government College University, Lahore
- University of Karachi, Karachi
- University of the Punjab, Lahore
- COMSATS University, Islamabad
- University of Peshawar
- University of Lahore, Lahore
- NED University of Engineering and Technology (NEDUET), University Road, Karachi
- The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Bahawalpur
- Bahauddin Zakaria University (BZU), Multan

- Baluchistan University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Khuzdar, Baluchistan
- Baluchistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS), Quetta, Baluchistan
- Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital Rawalpindi, Pakistan
- Netkent Mediterranean Research and Science University, Lefkoşa, TRNC, Turkey
- TÜBİTAK, Ankara, Turkey
- Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan (Associate Member)
- PCSIR, Islamabad
- PCRWR, Islamabad
- Institute of Space Technology, Islamabad
- Health Service Academy, Islamabad
- Agha Khan University Medical College, Karachi
- NRC, Cairo, Egypt
- Superior University, Lahore
- Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
- Islamic University in Uganda, Uganda
- Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran
- Islamic University of Technology, Bangladesh
- Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
- Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia
- Bangladesh University of Health Sciences, Bangladesh
- International Islamic University (IIUI), Islamabad
- Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russian Federation
- Virtual University of Pakistan, Lahore
- National University of Technology, Islamabad
- University of Sargodha
- University of Management and Technology, Lahore
- Sultan Qaboos University, Oman
- International Institute of Science, Art and Technology, Gujranwala
- University of Sialkot (Associate Member)





COMSTECH Country Specific Programs

Nigeria Program



In September 2022, COMSTECH launched COMSTECH-Nigeria Science and Technology Cooperation Program in a press conference which was attended by senior diplomats of various OIC countries, officers of ministries of foreign affairs and science and technology, academicians and Nigerian students studying in Pakistan.

Coordinator General, COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and the High Commissioner of Nigeria, H. E. Mr. Mohammed Bello Abioye jointly addressed the press conference at COMSTECH.

Prof. Choudhary said that COMSTECH continues to serve member states in the sphere of Science & Technology as its mandate and strategic vision. He said that COMSTECH launches a purposeful COMSTECH-Nigeria S&T Cooperation Program for capacity building of the brotherly state. Prof. Choudhary thanked the Government of Nigeria for accepting proposed collaborative program and constituting an inter-ministerial Committee to explore the implementation of this initiative. The Raw Materials Research and Development Council, (RMRDC), Abuja, Nigeria is focal organization to implement the program. Prof. Choudhary informed that the purpose of this collaboration is to help the Nigerian S&T institutions for capacity building for socio-economic uplift of the country.

The High Commissioner of Nigeria, H. E. Mr. Mohammed Bello Abioye appreciated the efforts of COMSTECH and offered full support from his office to COMSTECH-Nigeria S&T Cooperation. He assured that Nigeria would also help the other African OIC countries for their uplift.

H. E. Ambassador Askar Mussinov, Assistant Secretary General Science and Technology OIC addressed the session online. He said OIC General Secretariat is working closely with COMSTECH on several major initiatives and programs.

COMSTECH-Nigeria Program includes Launching of women scientist research fellowship program, institution linkages between Nigeria and Pakistan, capacity building of Nigerian scholars and students, launching of book comprising of joint research publications and patents of Pakistani and Nigerian scientists, industrial internship of Nigerian professionals in food processing and value addition, and study visit of Pakistani students to Nigeria. ♦

Yemen Program



COMSTECH in collaboration with Embassy of the Republic of Yemen in Islamabad launches "COMSTECH-CCoE Yemen Programme" in June 2022 for the capacity building of Yemeni scientists. H. E. Mohammed Motahar Alashabi, the Ambassador of Yemen had a series of meetings with Coordinator General COMSTECH to start this programme.

Under this programme COMSTECH initially announces 50 fellowships for Yemeni nationals who are currently in Yemen. These fellowships are being offered by members of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence (CCoE), International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) (University of Karachi), The University of Lahore, Lahore, and Health Services Academy (HSA), Islamabad. ♦

Sudan Program



COMSTECH in collaboration with the Embassy of Sudan in Islamabad is in process to launch "COMSTECH-Sudan Collaborative Program in Science and Technology" for the capacity building of Sudanese scientists and students. In the first phase, the COMSTECH-Sudan Program will include:

1. Fellowship Program
2. Workshops and Training Courses
3. Compilation of a Book of Joint Research Publications and Patents
4. Women in Science Fellowship Program
5. Skill Development Fellowship Program

COMSTECH in collaboration with the member institutions of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence (CCoE) will offer fully funded fellowships, in collaboration with institutions in Sudan will organize thematic workshops, compile a book of research publications and patents, and will offer skill development fellowships.

Sudanese women scientists will be able to benefit from "Women in Science" fellowship program to conduct research studies in leading R&D institutions of Pakistan, and other COMSTECH member states. ♦

Kyrgyzstan Program



COMSTECH and Kyrgyzstan are in process to launch the COMSTECH-Kyrgyzstan Program. The program will include: Research fellowships, international workshops, exhibitions of products developed by the universities, and technicians training program.

Research fellowships will be offered to young researchers/scientists/engineers of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan to enable them to spend 6-12 months at a relevant center of excellence in OIC states, especially in Pakistan. International workshops will be organized in Pakistan, in the areas of climate change, healthcare, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, machine learning and deep learning. Exhibitions of products, developed by the students/ researchers in the universities of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan, will be organized. Technicians/Researchers from Kyrgyzstan will spend 4-6 weeks at a center of excellence/ university in OIC member states to learn the operations of the state-of-the-art instruments. ♦

Somalia Program



COMSTECH is in process to launch a collaborative S&T program with Somalia to invite top two universities to join the COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence, offer training in agriculture, food security, health, technician training, fellowships and conduct health camps in the fields of ophthalmology/ cataract surgery and capacity building workshops. ♦

COMSTECH International Conference on Science Communication

FROM PAGE 1

a direction to think over the coordinated working of the universe. He said that it is our religious duty to relentlessly and continuously pursue scientific knowledge which ultimately results in finding the scientific principles working therein. He said that we Muslims generally are not fulfilling the responsibility bestowed upon us by Allah through Quran to acquire, possess and promote scientific education in our communities.

The Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary extended a very warm welcome to the participants and the experts. He informed that speakers from 7 countries with long experience and notable contributions in communication of science will address this conference.

He informed that over 460 participants got registered to attend this conference with different backgrounds, from science, media, policy makers, social work, to arts and cultures, diplomacy and environment.

He mentioned that we often perceive Science and Society as two separate worlds, far away from each other, but they are not. He said that indeed they are two sides of the same coin, there is an organic relationship between the two. Society benefits from scientific discoveries and scientific values. Whereas science needs social and political support. Without each other, none can flourish or sustain. He suggested that during the economic crises, strong public support for science is crucially important for the survival of scientific enterprise.

Prof. Choudhary concluded that society must shape the path of science, rather than science shaping societies. Society should help determine how its resources are deployed to fund scientific work, encouraging beneficial research, and discouraging others. Science should serve the interests and needs of the society.

Associate coordinator of the conference, Prof. Dr. Syed Javaid Khurshid gave a comprehensive introduction of the conference. He said that the basic aim of this conference is to develop a bridge between scientists and journalists to develop awareness in the general public.

In the first session of the conference, Mr. Michael Wadleigh, Coordinator UNESCO and Oscar award winner film maker gave lecture on "UNESCO open data to stop global social economic collapse", Mr. Kamran Akhtar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs talked on the 'role of science communication in international diplomacy', and Dr. Mahaleetchumy Arujan, Director Malaysian Biotechnology Information Center (MABIC) gave lecture on 'science communication as an approach to future global crisis preparedness. ♦



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