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Symposium

The 2017 Science, Technology and Innovation for Global Peace and Prosperity: Conference Report

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The 21st Conference on Science, Technology and Innovation for Global Peace and Prosperity was aimed at bringing together scientists, academicians, health care experts and others involved in science and technology to discuss advancements in the respective fields and their implications for the future. The conference was organized by the Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS) which was established in 1984 to promote as a consultative organization in science and technology programmes and to bolster research on major problems facing Islamic countries. It was also in coordination with Necmettin Erbakan University and TÜBA, Turkish Academy of Sciences.

The 2017 Science, Technology and Innovation for Global Peace and Prosperity took place on October 8-11, 2017, in Konya, Turkey. The article

summarizes the symposium gathering over 120 local and international participants representing over 30 countries. The conference featured an opening ceremony, a keynote speaker and 45 research presentations. A foundation motivation for the conference was that effective progress is highly dependent on tight collaboration among different sectors, including health care, industry, and education in the Islamic world.



Dr. Ahmet Arif Ergin, president of TÜBİTAK, was the keynote speaker of the conference. Ergin presented Research and Innovation Framework Programmes under the European Union and showed how these programmes are the world's largest research and innovation funding mechanisms since 1984. In tandem with those promising collaboration efforts in IAS countries, Ergin concluded by emphasizing that the transformation

of the cooperation within the members of IAS should be constructed similar to programmes implemented under European Union Framework Programmes.

In the opening session, *In the Shadows of Jalal Ad-Din Rumi*, two speakers provided valuable advice regarding the lasting influence of Rumi on Islamic thought and culture and the importance of the golden rule as a base of coexistence. Upon providing Rumi's brief biography, Dr. Bilal Kuşpınar, Director of International Rumi Centre for the Study of Civilisations at Necmettin Erbakan University, described how Rumi has affected the hearts and minds of thousands of people from all parts of the world. Along another vein, Dr. Şinasi Gündüz, University of Istanbul, presented the golden rule of religious discourses as the base of mutual understanding of humanity.

Dr. Jackie Ying, Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology, and Dr. Munir Nayfeh, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, have been at the forefront of the research in nanotechnology and presented intriguing recent developments in Nanotechnology. Both speakers in different sessions demonstrated that developing nanostructured materials for energy and biomedical applications will not only open up new ways of improving drug delivery, nanomedicine, biosensor, cell culture substrate and tissue engineering applications, however, but also provide ground for pharmaceutical and biotechnology industry to flourish.

Recognizing continued challenges in technology and innovation in the Middle East, Adnan Badran, former Prime Minister of Jordan, described how science policy in the Middle East countries is in turmoil due to incompatibility, instability and absence of the political will. In the same way, Dr. Khurshid Hasanain's talk also focused on issues and challenges regarding academic research and innovation in

OIC countries by presenting a recent published report on the performance of seven OIC countries. Dr. Atilla Karaman and Dr. Kenan Bağcı, SESRIC, presented an overview of the current developments in the OIC member countries in the field of research and scientific development. Following on the previous presentations, Dr. Ensar Gül, Istanbul Şehir University, put special emphasis on the importance of investment on generating innovation. By using the entrepreneurial 'valley of death' analogy, Dr. Gül argues that investments on science and development should be continuous *until* revenue really starts to flow. In the same vein, Jacques van der Meer, Centre for Mediterranean Integration, has outlined the structure of the Innovation Barometer for the MENA region and shared the initial outcomes of the national scores for MENA region countries.



In the following session, Dr. Salim Al Hassani of University of Manchester focused on the issue of inclusiveness of teaching material in science, technology and innovation. To combat the issues of inclusiveness, he noted that 1001 inventions global initiative is an award-winning international science

and cultural heritage organization that raises awareness of the creative golden age of Muslim. Similarly, given that Islamophobia and Turkophobia have been on the upswing over the last century, Dr. Kemal Enz Argon, Necmettin Erbakan University, provided insight for successful representation for contemporary Turkish and Muslims scholars around the world.

In his presentation, Dr. Tarik Quadir, Necmettin Erbakan University, examined a number of issues faced by the Islamic world and noted that Islamic values should be expected to play an important role in addressing sustainable development. On the other hand, Dr. Dalal Najib, National Academy of Sciences, in her presentation, gave a fairly positive forecast explaining current opportunities for international collaboration to achieve sustainable development all over the world. In response to growing concern over sustainable biodiversity, Dr. Faridah Hanum Ibrahim, Universiti Putra Malaysia, highlighted the importance of commitment of the OIC countries to Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020) and Aichi Targets which is developed under the Convention of Biodiversity to save biodiversity.

Two presentations by Dr. Khalid Yusoff, UCSI University, and Dr. K. Thiruchelvam, Perdana School of Science, delved into future of medical education and innovation agenda in Malaysia in more depth. Dr. Yusoff noted that a solid scientific foundation imbued with strong humanistic values must be all times emphasized. Similarly, Dr. Thiruchelvam explored on Malaysia's STI achievements, salient features of the nation's innovation system (NIS), the key challenges of its NIS and some suggestions on moving forward.

Dr. Fatih Gültekin, Health Sciences University, demonstrated many case examples on food additives and presented how some of food additives may induce several diseases including allergy, migraine, inflammatory intestinal diseases, gut and hyperactivity. Similarly, Dr. Liaquat Ali, Bangladesh University of Health Sciences, provided ample insight into a health-friendly rice-based diet. The speaker proposed that rice-based can be made more health-friendly with scientific exploration of its carbohydrate content and the knowledge can be highly useful in the management of cardometabolic disorders through a cost-effective and culturally sensitive approach. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari, Quaid-i Azam University, presented on molecular systematics and the importance of applied ethnobotany laboratory (MOSAEL). While Dr. Gulnar Vagapova, Kazan State Medical Academy, presented details of her recent research on the inflammation of the thyroid gland and DNA-Binding Antibodies, Nedim Aytekin of Yıldırım Beyazıt University, also talked about the past, present and future of the Medical Journal of the IAS.

The introduction of clinical trials plays an important role in final regulatory approval of modern pharmaceuticals. Dr. Adnan Mjalli, CEO of High Point Clinical Trials Center and Chairman of PharmaCore, talked about efforts to advance clinical trials and to translate innovative science into medicines for the treatment of global unmet medical needs. Similarly, diabetes mellitus was often raised as concern and two speakers, Dr. Shazia Anjum, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Dr. Ali A. Moosavi Movahendi, University of Tehran, pointed out what kind of implications diabetes mellitus has and possible experimental strategy to combat diabetes mellitus.

In relation to possibilities for future advancements in OIC countries, there recently has been a promising attempt to overcome technological, scientific, and intellectual dependency on the West. In this regard, Dr. Abdullah Çavuşoğlu, General Director of HAVELSAN, put emphasis on the recent development of effective, powerful, high-quality, national cyber defence system for national security of OIC countries. Similarly, Dr. A. Nuri Yurdusev, Middle East Technical University, pointed out that development of science, technology and innovation does not automatically lead to peace and prosperity. Instead, science and technology should reconnect with and build itself on a philosophy which is based on its own societal values. Similarly, Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro, ECO Science Foundation, outlined the tools and methodology for inquiry based science education and the fusion of civilizations school curriculum development.

Dr. Thameur Chaibi, National Research Institute for Rural Engineering, in his presentation highlighted the significance of creating a framework of suitable cooperation and facilitating the implementation of joint action projects driven by research needs in water-energy-food security nexus domain. Two speakers from Islamic University of Gaza, Dr. Hala Jarallah El-Khozondar and Dr. Mohammed M. Shabat, provided insight into metamaterials and their applications and simulation of artificial waveguide structures for solar cell energy. In addition, Dr. Muthana Shanshai of University of Al-Anbar, mentioned a study of the impact of radioactive pollution that has shown that high numeric value of the radioactive contamination (3.0-6.8) ppm DU should be considered as one of the leading factors for the origin

of the increase in cancer disease cases, women repetitive abortions, malformations and generic deformations of newly borne babies. It was pointed out in the audience that recent findings and developments regarding radioactive pollution in Iraq and Syria should be discussed at depth from the perspective of researchers, physicians, and academicians, with the aim to estimate the devastating impact of the war on local people.

Dr. Syed M. Qaim, University of Cologne, presented the use of novel accelerator-produced radionuclides in medicine. He pointed out that additional research in radionuclides can fuel current research efforts in the usage of medium and large sized accelerators in medical radionuclide production. Dr. Mustafa Ersöz, Selçuk University, concluded the session with an appeal to build a collaborative research network among OIC countries.

Dr. Nidhal Guessoum, American University of Sharjah, highlighted the lack of methodologically rigorous research on science literacy of the Islamic countries on which to base strategies for improving and developing the culture of sciences in OIC societies. Similarly, Dr. Muhammad Sabieh Anwar, Lahore University, outlined the tools and methodology used in scientific research putting emphasis on advancing the frontiers of scientific knowledge in the realms of physics, life sciences, medicine and astronomy. Anwar's presentation, along with Dr. Athar Osama's presentation, Founder of Muslim-Science.com, provided insight into how to create an environment resurrecting a celebration of practical investigation and creativity among aspiring youngsters. Finally, Dr. Muammer Koç, Hamad bin Khalifa University, presented his delivery as an open door discussion where participation from the audience was encouraged to expressed their opinions regarding the role and impact of universities toward achieving sustainable development goals. Based on the participants' evaluations and commentaries, this type of collaboration with ample room for interactive discussion is appreciated and much needed for future meetings.



The 2017 Science, Technology and Innovation for Global Peace and Prosperity spanned across many areas of interest with regards to development of science, technology and innovation in the Islamic world. A number of

recommendations for implementation for the future of OIC countries were developed. Attendees expressed the great value of this type of sharing knowledge and experience across different disciplines and how this type of cooperation provided a catalyst for the development and cooperation among different disciplines for future projects. There appears to be broad consensus on the opportunities that lie ahead in the Islamic world but there are also many economic, political, social and cultural obstacles on the path toward materializing these benefits. It is clear that Islamic World Academy of Science will continue to be a forerunner in identifying these strengths and weaknesses of the Islamic countries. Undoubtedly, these efforts should be regarded as a starting point for future investigations and collaborations.