

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.I., T.I.
 Mustafa Prize Laureate

Science and technology has been central to socio-economic development of any nation. Every country, big or small, needs clear vision, defined policies, and adequately funded plans for the promotion of science and technology, and their applications in socio-economic progress. However, collective experiences of European Union, ASEAN, and GCC establish the effectiveness of regional cooperation in every sector, including S&T and higher education. In the OIC region, while many member states have made phenomenal progress in S&T, inter-Islamic cooperation in these sectors are very much needed. To address this important need, the S&T summits in Astana 2017 (Kazakhstan), and UAE 2021 and subsequent CFMs have delegated the COMSTech, and OIC-GS to work towards the establishment of OIC-dialogue platform.

The idea of OIC-15 Dialogue Platform was presented by the Ex-President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev in 2017. The OIC-15 was proposed as a platform of 15 OIC countries, leading in science

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First Meeting of OIC-15 Dialogue Platform held

The First Ministerial Meeting of OIC-15 Dialogue Platform held at Almaty, Kazakhstan on 25 - 26 May 2023. The meeting was attended by the ministers and delegations from Kazakhstan, Qatar, Cameroon, Morocco, Iran, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, UAE, Indonesia and Turkiye along with the COMSTech Secretariat and OIC General Secretariat.

H.E. Mr. Sayasat Nurbek, Minister of Science and Higher Education, Kazakhstan, chaired the meeting. After the adoption of the agenda, the heads of country delegations, COMSTech → ON PAGE 3



COMSTech Initiative to Strengthen Traditional Medicine in OIC in Collaboration with Chinese Institutions

A high-level delegation of Chinese scientists and Industrialists visited COMSTech secretariat to promote cooperation for research and development in the fields of natural products, biotechnology, public health and traditional medicine through institutional and industrial linkages between China and OIC member states, and help strengthen academic and research initiatives between the People's Republic of China and the OIC member states. The delegation comprised of top tier leadership of industries in the area of traditional medicine. Participants from several OIC member states also joined the discussions virtually.

OIC member states such as Pakistan, Iran and Indonesia are already exploring traditional medicines in their own capacity. Through this collaboration, COMSTech seeks to liaison



between OIC member states and Chinese institutions for strengthening cooperation in the field of healthcare.

To strengthen this collaboration and enhance the networking, COMS-TECH organized this dialogue which included a series

of key talks on the subject by scientists, and representatives of pharmaceutical industries of China.

The event was attended by researchers, relevant personnel from the research laboratories and industries and representa-

tives from the embassies of OIC member states in Islamabad. The aspects of collaboration such as set up of joint labs, exchange programs for scholars of OIC member states and product based research was also discussed. → ON PAGE 4

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COMSTech and Ibadat International Univeristy Sign MoU

The OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTech) and Ibadat International University, Islamabad (IIUI) signed memorandum of understanding. The Coordinator General COMSTech, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and the Rector of the IIUI, Prof. Dr. Syed Amir Gilani signed the MoU at COMSTech.

Both institutions have agreed to promote and strengthen cooperation by providing a platform for collaborative activities in the relevant fields of mutual interest.

Both institutions will develop and

implement joint educational and scientific programs in the field of science, technology and innovation. They will collaborate in organizing national and international events, such as workshops, conferences, symposia, seminars, exhibitions, training course.

The Ibadat international university will join COMSTech Consortium of Excellence (CCoE) as Associate Member and will register at OIC Technology and Innovation Portal. Ibadat International University will be able to get benefit from the COMSTech Distinguished Scholars Programme. COMSTech will arrange visits of distinguished

scholars to Ibadat International University to deliver lectures, short courses, conducting workshops, training courses along with the placement of students, academic and scientific personnel as well.

COMSTech will help Ibadat University in developing faculty through sabbatical visits, and will provide training and consultation for the establishment of Science Park.

COMSTech will develop a programme in

association with IIUI through which young researchers from OIC states particularly from Africa will visit IIUI to conduct research for 6-12 months' duration. ♦



Free Eye Camp and Doctor's Training in Chad

COMSTech in collaboration with Islamic Development Bank and Layton Rahmatullah Benevolent Trust (LRBT) conducted a free eye camp in Nadgemana, Chad during May 21st and May 28th, 2023.

In this regard, an eight-member delegation of Pakistani ophthalmologists from LRBT and COMS-TECH officials is set to leave for

Nadgemana, Chad to conduct this important eight-day activity to conduct more than 400 free cataract surgeries.

The team will also train local doctors in the latest cataract surgery techniques, conducting post-operative examinations of patients, and launching an awareness campaign → ON PAGE 3



COMSTECH Hosts International Workshop on “Addressing the Challenges of Food Security in the Sahel” in Niamey

The Ministerial Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) of the Organization of Islamic Organization (OIC), based in Islamabad, Pakistan is pursuing a policy of concerted outreach to Africa. In support of its active engagement with Africa COMSTECH is broadening its cooperation in multiple sectors with the continent.

COMSTECH has initiated several key initiatives to deepen its cooperation with African countries. These include: Health Africa program in ophthalmology and neurology, Establishment of laboratories and institutions in Gambia, Uganda, Chad, and Sudan, COMSTECH Scholarships and Fellowships for African Least Developed Countries (LDCs), COMSTECH country specific program with Sudan, Somalia and Mauritania and Virology and vaccine technology training programs.

In the framework of its partnership with Africa COMSTECH has enlarged the framework of its cooperative activities in areas of environment and climate change with focus on Sahel and West Africa. COMSTECH has also

established collaborative partnerships with several institutions from Sahel/West African region as people in this vast region are confronted with challenges of climate change, soil degradation, access to water, and biodiversity loss.

Sahel region of West Africa is facing food and nutrition crisis. High food prices, conflict and displacement have driven millions of people into hunger and malnutrition. Deteriorating food situation in the Sahel has been caused by multiple factors including drought, desertification, land degradation and the impacts of climate change, conflict, and Covid-19 pandemic.

In view of the unprecedented food crisis in the Sahel and to strengthen cooperation with OIC member countries in West Africa COMSTECH has organized an International Training Workshop on the topic of “Addressing the Challenges of Food Security in the Sahel” from 15 to 19 May 2023 at the AGRHYMET Regional Centre, Niamey, Niger.

This important initiative by COMSTECH is in collaboration with Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) in

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Islamic World Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) In Rabat, Morocco, and Islamic Organization of Food Security (IoFS) in Astana, Kazakhstan.

The workshop is in continuation of COMSTACHs initiatives to intensify cooperation with the OIC member countries in West Africa. COMSTECH participated in a seminar hosted in May, 2022 by the Sahel Coalition in Brussels, Belgium and LifeWatch ERIC, an e-Science European infrastructure on the theme of developing science capacity for the Sahel and West African nations in areas of biodiversity, food production and food security.

Subsequently COMSTECH Forum for Environment and Ecosystem Restoration (CFEER) organized an international seminar on "Solutions to Combat Food Insecurity and Malnutrition in the Sahel" which was held in September, 2022 at the Global Science Summit during the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). In March 2023 COMSTECH Forum facilitated a meeting on the sidelines of the Africa-Europe Science Collaboration and

Innovation Platform (AERAP) in Brussels of experts from the Sahel region and Wageningen University and Research in the Netherlands on promotion of science collaboration. Challenges of food and nutrition security in the Sahel offers the opportunity to address the root causes of food insecurity and to develop food and agricultural systems that are less dependent on external shocks. This requires greater focus on the need to enhance agricultural productivity, develop resilient agriculture, reduce food loss and waste and undertake measures to find solutions for promoting sustained food security.

The five day workshop will target experts and policy makers working on agricultural matters from 13 OIC member countries and provide lectures, hands on training and interactive sessions followed by two days of consultations and field visits. Participating countries include: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

The training will be on sustainable solutions to combat food insecurity and malnutrition. It will empower

experts and policy makers in West Africa to make better decisions on adopting agro-ecological practices and sustainable actions to improve agricultural productivity through sustainable use of water resources, enhanced agriculture productivity and new crop breeding technologies.

The workshop will also focus on climate-smart agriculture practices to increase food production and enhance food system resilience to climate change. Attention will be on adoption of sustainable land and water management practices, agricultural technologies to drought tolerant crop varieties, improving post-harvest management practices, adoption of resilient agricultural technologies and drought-tolerant crop varieties.

The upcoming international workshop initiated by COMSTECH on food security in the Sahel at the Regional Centre in Niamey, Niger with participation of 13 OIC member countries from West Africa will further strengthen the bonds of friendship and solidarity and open new areas to enhance cooperation with African nations. ♦

Workshop on Modern Spectroscopic Techniques

The chemistry department of the University of Jordan and COMSTECH organized jointly a “Workshop on Modern Spectroscopic Techniques and Their Applications in Research” during March 12-14.

This three-day workshop consisted of lectures of eminent scholars and practical sessions involving hands-on experience on interpretation of spectroscopic data. This workshop offered the opportunity of hands on training on modern spectroscopic instruments and software that are used in the field of chemical and biological sciences. Lectures followed by discussion session further strengthened the knowledge and understanding of the modern spectroscopic techniques and promoted research partnership between the scientists of OIC countries.

Assistant Secretary General-OIC, H.E. Mr Askar Mussinov said that It is my delight to welcome you all in this 3 - day event organized by COMSTECH and University of Jordan. He said that spectroscopy offers the necessary tools to investigate the structure and function of small chemical compounds as well as biological macromolecules. He said we

sincerely hope that this event will contribute in the development and strengthening of the capacity in modern spectroscopic techniques at the regional level through the contribution of eminent scholars from various universities and R & D institutions.

He conveyed, on behalf of OIC secretariat in Jeddah, well wishes to COMSTECH and University of Jordan for organizing this illustrious gathering, and offered full support of our secretariat to COMSTECH for achieving its mission and objectives.

In the inaugural session the University of Jordan announced to become the member of the COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence (CCoE) and signed the agreement with COMSTECH.

Experts of the spectroscopy from Germany, China, Greece, Pakistan, Jordan and Egypt participated as resource persons. Among these speakers, we had pioneers of this field whose work is shining light to many chemists and biologists around the world. Researchers from Algeria, Pakistan, Jordan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Turkiye, USA, Kenya, Palestine and Kazakhstan participated in the workshop. ♦

Two-day Workshop on Science Journalism

The Khwarizmi Science Society in collaboration with COMSTECH organized a two-day workshop on "Science Writing and Science Journalism in Urdu" at the Center of Excellence in Solid State Physics, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

The renowned Pakistani science journalist and writer Mr. Aleem Ahmed conducted this two-day workshop during May 15-16. The workshop was delivered in Urdu and it was attended by 20 participants.

The purpose of the workshop was to train the participants to write fluent and easy to understand articles in Urdu on science topics for popular media to popularize the science among the masses.

The inaugural session was addressed by the Prof. Dr. Shahzad Naseem, distinguished national professor. Dr. Shahid Atiq welcomed the participants of the workshop and gave introductory remarks whereas Prof. Dr. Saira Riaz, distributed the certificates. ♦

COMSTECH and UoL Offer Scholarships to The Gambia

COMSTECH, the OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, announces an exciting opportunity for the Staff of Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital (EFSTH), The Gambia, in collaboration with The University of Lahore (UoL).

In collaboration with The University of Lahore, COMSTECH is offering 15 fully funded scholarships in a variety of fields of study, including Biomedical Sciences, Pharmacy, Management Sciences, Statistics, Medical Imaging Sciences, Electrical Engineering, Electronics & Electrical Systems, and Dietetics & Nutritional Sciences. These scholarships are available for students at the undergraduate, postgraduate, and Ph.D. levels.

The Chairman, Board of Governors of The University of Lahore, Mr. Awais Raoof, said, “We intend to facilitate the education and health sectors of the Gambia through scholarships and capacity building. As the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital is the only teaching hospital in the Gambia, and the main referral center for

the whole country with a capacity of over 600 beds, I strongly believe that our support will uplift their health sector and considerably contribute to the community as well. We are committed to further enhance the scope of our support to EFSTH and people of the Gambia in the future”. All selected students will have the opportunity to study at UoL, and the primary goal of these scholarships is to support and uplift the education and health sector in The Gambia. This is an incredible opportunity for the students to pursue their educational dreams and contribute to the growth and development of their country.

COMSTECH expresses its gratitude towards the management of The University of Lahore for their unwavering support and their dedication to this noble cause, as well as their support for COMSTECH and its programs. The scholarships being offered will not only provide financial assistance but also provide an opportunity to gain exposure to a different culture and diverse academic environment. ♦

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From Coordinator General's Desk

and technology. The objective of this platform is to suggest practical measures to help the OIC Member States in their efforts for the development of science, technology, and innovation.

Following the resolutions of the CFMs, the COMSTECH and OIC-GS, working closely with the Government of Kazakhstan, have organized the first Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of OIC-15 Dialogue Platform on 1-2 December 2022 in Islamabad. The

SOM prepared the key documents for the first Ministerial Meeting of the OIC-15 Dialogue Platform, that included the Objective, agenda, ToRs and Working Procedure of the Platform. Subsequently, the 1st Ministerial Meeting was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan during 25-26 May, 2023. The meeting attended by representatives of 11 of the member countries and endorsed the recommendations of the Senior Officials meeting, including the role of COMSTECH as the Secretariat

of OIC-15 Dialogue Platform. It was decided that the platform will be a consultative forum with non-binding resolutions and outcome. Its role will be to complement the activities of other OIC organs in enhancing cooperation in S&T related areas for the uplift of the member states, according to the charter and agreed goals of the OIC. The minutes and recommendations of the OIC-15 dialogue platform will be reported to the COMSTECH General Assembly. COMSTECH is

pleased to confirm that its joint proposal with the Ministry of Science and Technology and Higher Education of Kazakhstan, entitled “Preparing OIC Countries for the 4th Industrial Revolution and the Harnessing of Artificial Intelligence (AI)”, received overwhelming support from the participants and was approved for implementation. The participants also agreed on holding the next Ministerial Meeting of the Platform in the Islamic Republic of Iran in

2024. We at the COMSTECH consider the establishment of OIC-15 dialogue platform as a major step forward. COMSTECH's well developed facilities, and vast experience required to conceive, host and steer various initiatives, and its excellent coordination with the OIC-GS, and government of Kazakhstan will help in successful launching of this major initiative. ♦

Role of Science Diplomacy Stressed to Address Climate Change

COMSTECH organized a one-day introductory course on “science diplomacy and sustainability” at COMSTECH auditorium. The course was addressed by the Chairman ATRI Advisory, Malaysia and the former Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Prof. Zakri Abdul Hamid, and Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kamran Akhtar. The welcome address was delivered by the Coordinator General, COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and the Adviser COMSTECH, Dr. S. Khurshid Hasanain, delivered the introductory remarks. Dr. Zakri delivered two lectures, and explained in both lectures, that the drive towards sustainability and preservation of biodiversity and the earth's resources in the face of climate change is more challenging in the Global South that also includes the 57 countries of the Organization of Islamic

Cooperation (OIC). He said that these countries which are still in need of rapid economic development, face the consequent negative impacts of expanded economic growth on the environment and biodiversity. He said that this challenge requires a careful scientific balance between promoting development and enabling conservation. He discussed the possible course of action of various stakeholders on the basis of science diplomacy. Prof. Zakri stressed the need for enhanced role of science in multilateral negotia-

tions to overcome the problems of climate change and loss of biodiversity. Mohammad Kamran Akhtar, Additional Secretary (ACDIS) from the Policy Planning and Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, spoke about the essentials of science diplomacy in different areas of international negotiations emphasising its role as a soft power to advance diplomatic objectives and creating goodwill. He further described Pakistan's contribution to multinational scientific initiatives such as the

CERN LHC collaboration in physics. With regards to the control on greenhouse gas emissions he emphasized that while it is a common problem of all nations, there has to be a graded responsibility for reduction in emissions based on the contributions of various nations towards the current state of the environment. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, the Coordinator General of COMSTECH speaking on the occasion explained the role of COMSTECH in the domain of science diplomacy. He mentioned

its ongoing initiatives on health and medicine in sub-saharan Africa, its cooperation on food security with concerned organizations and its award of research grants to scientists in member states as examples of science diplomacy. He pointed out that COMSTECH is leading the OIC effort to mobilize the resources of the 15 leading OIC member states (OIC-15 Dialog Platform) to cooperate on major science and technology initiatives for economic development. He welcomed the diplomats representing a large number of OIC and non-OIC countries, and the participants of the course, and expressed the hope that it may lead to enhanced cooperation in science and technology through the aegis of COMSTECH. The audience included a large number of the Diplomatic Corps in Islamabad, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, academics, and professionals from the field of sustainable development. ♦



Training on Randomized Clinical Trials in Uganda

COMSTECH in collaboration with the Islamic University in Uganda organized a two-day training on “Randomized Clinical Trials at Islamic University in Uganda, Kampala, Uganda. Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, welcomed the participants of the training workshop online. He said the objective of this training is to build capacity in the critical area of clinical trials for drug discovery and development. He said that the clinical trials as per international standards, following the principles of good clinical practices, healthcare code of ethics, and biosafety, and in compliance with regulatory and sponsor requirements are critically important for

successful outcome of drugs, vaccines, biologicals, and even diagnostics development process. He said that it is important to have growth and greater involvement of OIC nations in this field. He mentioned that this international workshop is an attempt to fill the capacity gap. Dr. Choudhary said that this is a critical step in the long journey of a drug, biologic or vaccine to move from preclinical phase to a clinically validated product. Assistant Secretary General of OIC for Science and Technology, H.E. Mr. Askar Mussinov delivered his message online. He said I am delighted to share this message with you all in support of this two-day training. He said that the

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) supports this joint initiative of COMSTECH and IUIU, and recognizes the immense importance of clinical trials towards the development of safe and effective medicines against prevailing and neglected diseases. Mr. Mussinov said that clinical trials provide a scientific basis for further development in medical sciences. He said that it is essential for OIC states to establish this sector on strong footing and build capacity to discuss and develop new medicines. Consultant COMSTECH on health initiatives, Dr. Abdur Rashid, Program Officer COMSTECH, Ms. Maham

Yameen, Head and Consultant Nephrologist, Maroof International Hospital, Prof. Dr. Mujtaba Quadri, Director ORIC, Indus Hospital, Dr. Ammad Fahim participated in the training from Pakistan, and COMSTECH distinguished scholar, Prof. Dr.

Khalid Saeed Khan, from the Granada University in Spain also participated in the training. More than 100 national and international participants participated online, while 60 researchers from Uganda participated in the training in-person. ♦



Free Eye Camp and Doctor's Training in Chad

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targeting youth to prevent avoidable blindness. Furthermore, COMSTECH, with the assistance of IsDB, has planned to provide a two-year specialized post-graduate training program to 16 African ophthalmologists in diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma surgery at local institutes. The event was jointly organized by the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH), and Layton Rahmatullah Benevolent Trust (LRBT). COMSTECH, in collaboration with IsDB and LRBT, had conducted a free eye camp in Niamey, Niger last year. These free eye camps aim to support the OIC least developed member states in Africa. The COMSTECH and Pakistani ophthalmologists team is committed to providing free eye care services to the underprivileged communities of Chad, said Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH. He said, we believe that everyone has the right to access healthcare services, regardless of their financial position. He assured that

COMSTECH would continue its humble efforts to support OIC member states in Africa with the support and help of IsDB and LRBT. The free eye camp was held at the local hospital in Nadgemana in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Chad. The team of ophthalmologists was equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and worked tirelessly to provide high-quality eye care services to those in need. We are proud to be part of this initiative and are looking forward to serving the people of Chad," said the team members. They said we aim to help as many people as possible and to leave a positive impact on the local community. This eye camp was a testament to the commitment of COMSTECH, IsDB, and LRBT to improve the health and well-being of the people in the African Least Developed Countries of the OIC. The event is expected to have a significant impact on the lives of those who will receive free eye care services in Nadgemana, Chad. ♦



First Meeting of OIC-15 Dialogue Platform held

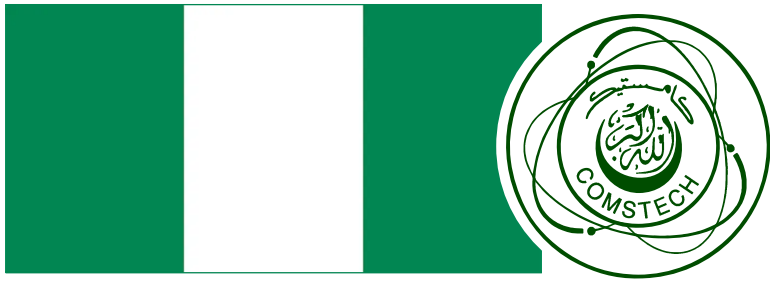
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Secretariat, OIC General Secretariat and Kaznu Al-Farabi University delivered their speeches. The meeting deliberated upon the recommendations of the expert committee and adopted the Almaty Rules and Regulations of OIC-15 Dialogue Platform. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH along with his delegation held bilateral meetings with the Minister of Science and Higher Education of Kazakhstan and the Rector of Kaznu Al-Farabi University. It was agreed to enhance future collaborations and develop joint programs for the development of science and technology in the OIC region. ♦

COMSTech Country Specific Programs

Nigeria Program



In September 2022, COMSTech launched COMSTech-Nigeria Science and Technology Cooperation Program in a press conference.

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 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.


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. ♦

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. ♦

	<p>International Youth Forum for Agri-Biotechnology</p> <p>"Biotechnology for Food Security and Climate Resilience" Venue: National Center of Biotechnology Astana, Kazakhstan Date: 4-5 July 2023</p> <p>The theme "Agriculture Biotechnology" aims at providing the best knowledge and resources to young participants to advance their research goals. The youth forum will stimulate the desire to collaborate and change the world of agricultural biotechnology and innovation by promoting state-of-the-art practices in biotechnology research and promoting evidence-based practices.</p> <p>Who can participate? Academics, students, and researchers from the OIC countries are encouraged to apply.</p> <p>Topics Covered: - Plant biotechnology - Animal biotechnology - Microbial biotechnology - Food biotechnology</p> <p>CONTACT PERSONS.</p> <p>IOFSE: Ms. Rasha Al-Juhaimi, Programme Manager, email: rasha@iofse.org.kz COMSTech: Ms. Makpal Bulatova, Programme Manager, email: m.bulatova@iofse.org.kz ICBYF: Ms. Amel Duchesne, email: amel.duchesne@icbyf.org</p>
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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 of 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 Initiative to Strengthen Traditional Medicine in OIC in Collaboration with Chinese Institutions

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Coordinator General COMSTech, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary gave a comprehensive briefing to the delegation on COMSTech programs and initiatives, its scope and avenues of collaboration. He explored the avenues for Sino-COMSTech collaboration for the development of natural products, biotechnology, public health and traditional medicine in OIC member states. Prof. Choudhary briefed the delegation on various ways of institutional cooperation, capacity building, establishment of traditional Chinese medicine clinics and research lab.

President of Hunan University of Chinese Medicine, Prof. Dr. Aiguo Dai, said that our meeting will promote the international cooperation of traditional medicine between our school and "Belt and Road Initiative" countries. He said that the relations between China and Islamic countries are traditionally friendly. Prof. Dai said that China attaches great importance to friendly relations with Islamic countries and regards the OIC as an import bridge for China to cooperate with the Islamic countries.

Science Commissioner of Embassy of People's Republic of China in Islamabad, Mr. Yin Shengxin appreciated the Sino-COMSTech initiative. He said that the work of Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary is a good example of nurturing cooperation. He reiterated time tested Sino-Pak friendship. Mr. Shengxin said that traditional Chinese medicine cures diseases and brings health to the people.

Director General (EC & OIC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Asima Rabbani, said that China has a rich history of traditional medicine, which has been practiced for over two thousand years. She said the Sino-COMSTech initiative on strengthening cooperation in traditional medicine and allied biomedical sciences in OIC countries is a significant step towards promoting collaboration between China and OIC states. Ms. Rabbani said that COMSTech played an important role towards the development and promotion of institutional linkages in the field of science and technology.

Chairman, Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturer's Association, Syed Farooq Bukhari said that the Sino-COMSTech collaboration initiative provides an excellent opportunity for Pakistan to learn from the experiences of China and other OIC states and to develop strategies and policies that are tailored to its own needs and priorities.

The representatives of different Chinese pharmaceutical companies addressed the occasion as well. The Chinese delegation members met and exchanged ideas with scientists and experts of the field during the networking session. ♦



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