



THE EMERGING NATIONS SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Newsletter

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Dear Readers,

In 2008, we started various programs to help develop science as well as the appreciation of science by the public. We are continuing these efforts not only to improve public awareness of science, but also to help young scientist in developing nations to interact with their counterparts in scientifically advanced nations. In addition, a part of ENSF's policy is to participate in international events such as science and technology forums to gauge problems faced by nations in Asia and Africa and how scientific knowledge can be applied to solve these problems. We are now in the middle of 2009 with continued activities in our travel grant, fellowship and conference donation programs to include other areas of science and technology fields, as well as cooperating in additional geographical locations.

Professor K. Tahir Shah
Chairman, Board of Directors

Programmes

• International Year of Astronomy

In our last issue, we announced our support for the Khwarizmi Science Society (KSS), which is celebrating the International Year of Astronomy by organizing a large number of public events in various cities of Pakistan. They have done a remarkable job to increase public awareness of science all over the country and especially in rural areas. We congratulate them and wish them well for future success. Dr. Sabieh Anwar, Secretary of KSS wrote to us about the overwhelming response of the public in these words:

"Dear Dr. Shah,
Look at the enthusiasm of our budding scientists and astronomers, not in sophisticated and well-equipped schools in Lahore, but in one of the Punjab's poorest district: Okara. This has been made possible due to support from ENSF. Many thanks."

We too share this enthusiasm.



That's planet Mars – incredible! The great enthusiasm of budding astronomers.

• Travel and Research Grants

ENSF approved a travel and research grant under its cooperation agreement with the National Centre for Physics to Dr. Hamid Saleem, its Director General for his research stay of one month at Ruhr Universität Bochum, Germany.

ENSF research fellows Dr. Mohammad Jamil Aslam, Assistant Professor, Centre for Advanced Mathematics and Physics, National University of Science and Technology, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, and Mr. Istiaq Ahmed, National Centre for Physics, Islamabad, Pakistan, started their research in High Energy Physics under the supervision of Professor Ahmed Ali at DESY, Hamburg, Germany.

Mr. Muhammad Arshad, from the National Centre for Physics, Islamabad, Pakistan, continued his research work at Elettra Laboratory, Trieste, Italy, under a fellowship provided by ICTP and ENSF.

Dr. Alka Misra, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics and Astronomy, Lucknow University, Lucknow, India, was awarded a partial travel grant to visit the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy, and a grant for her research stay at Institut für Physikalische Chemie, Heinrich Heine Universität, Dusseldorf, Germany, at the invitation of Professor Karl Kleinermanns. Dr. Misra's research interest includes biological molecules in comets and other extra solar objects.

Under its South-South Travel Grants program, ENSF awarded a travel grant and fellowship to Dr. Farooq Azam Rathore, who is a specialist at the Armed Forces Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, to participate in the "First World Conference on Medical Rehabilitation in Rural and Developing Regions" held at Kayseri, Turkey, from June 9 to 11, 2009.

He was awarded the "Young Investigator Award 2009" by the International Society of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (ISPRM).

In cooperation with the Abdus Salam

International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), a fellowship is approved for Dr. Sadia Zaheer of the Government College University, Lahore, Pakistan, to participate in the Summer College on Plasma Physics, to be held in August 2009 at ICTP, Trieste, Italy. The college is directed by the chairman of the ENSF Scientific Council, Professor Padma Shukla and other eminent plasma physicists. Dr. Zaheer is a scientific collaborator of Professor G. Murtaza, a plasma physicist, who holds the Abdus Salam Chair at Government College University, Lahore, Pakistan.

International Collaborations

• Support for International Conferences

ENSF Board of Directors approved a donation of Euro 10,000.00 to the International School on Environmental Nano-Technology (ISENT 2009) to be held in Isfahan, Iran from 27 September to 1 October 2009. The conference is organized jointly by the Isfahan University of Technology, Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran and the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy. The school is directed by Professor S. Raghu, Advanced Fluidics LLC, University of Maryland, MD, USA, and Professor E. Shirani, Isfahan University of Technology. Professor Shirani is a member of the committee for M.A.B. Beg Prize in Physics instituted by ENSF.

• Discussion on Science in Africa Meeting at ICTP, Trieste, Italy.

ICTP held a one day meeting on "Discussion on Science in Africa" on May 6, 2009. Professor Shah participated as the Managing Editor of The African Physical Review (www.aphysrev.org), a peer reviewed international journal that publishes original research papers in all branches of experimental and theoretical physics. The meeting was attended by Dr. Jean Pierre Ezin, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, African Union, Dr. Hamadoun Tourè, Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union, Professor Francis K. Allotey, former head of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission and a former member of

the Board of Governors, International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, Austria, Professor Edward H.K. Akaho, the present chairman of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission, and many other eminent African and African-American scientists.

Various issues and questions related to Science and Technology in Africa posed by the ICTP director were discussed in this conference. In particular, topics such as areas of focus in science, distribution of effort between pure and applied sciences, focus on individual scientists versus institutions, and how to ensure the quality of research and education. Other questions that arose are: should ICTP intensify its effort to help create the Pan-African University system that is being considered by the African Union? Should ICTP become involved in establishing bigger institutions in Africa? For example, should it work towards supporting research and education across Africa as well as defining the future priorities of the continent under the umbrella of the African Union, with support from other entities such as European Union and African Science Foundation? There were complaints from many African scientists that diplomats from their home countries and international organizations do not have effective communication with scientists. There were suggestions that scientists should interact more effectively with the diplomatic establishments in Africa.

• Meetings with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

TRIESTE: The Chairman, Board of Directors of ENSF, Professor K. Tahir Shah met H.E Hon. Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan, on 26 June 2009. During a 30 minute meeting, various issues related to scientific and technological research in Pakistan were discussed. In particular, the National Initiative on Frontiers of Science and Technology to introduce 21st century's scientific disciplines including synthetic biology, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence and humanoid robotics to Pakistan's educational institutions. The project was presented to the Prime Minister of

Pakistan in January 2009 by Professor Shah (Issue 1, 2009).

In the news

G-8 Meeting of Foreign Ministers in Trieste, Italy emphasized cooperation in science and technology.

TRIESTE, 26 June: A one-day conference on "Afghanistan and Its Geographical Context: Development of a Regional Network of Cultural and Scientific Cooperation" was held in Trieste. It was organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the academy of science for the developing world (TWAS) as a side event to G-8 meeting of Foreign Ministers. The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Franco Frattini, Hon. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Afghanistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs and a representative of Hon. Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Pakistan's Foreign Minister were the main speakers. Hon. Frattini highlighted Italy's continuing efforts to strengthen cultural and scientific cooperation in Afghanistan and the region to which it belongs. The aim of this meeting, Mr. Frattini said, is to provide local and international players opportunity for dialogue. Researchers, universities, international organizations, international scientific centres, as well as institutional representatives gathered to discuss how to strengthen scientific and technological cooperation as key-factors in regional stabilization and economic growth. This enormous potential for regional cooperation has thus far not been adequately exploited, emphasized Hon. Frattini.

Foreign Minister Mr. Frattini further stated that research and science have prepared men to face major challenges using shared rules and languages – science remains the only common language, the only indiscriminately hospitable terrain. Scientists around the world share common goals and their mission is the same: to improve the lives of people on Earth, regardless of race, creed or political persuasion. This is why Italy strongly believes that scientific cooperation can make a unique contribution to the cause of regional stabilization. It is thus crucial to focus the attention of the international community on the

importance of culture and science for development.

Minister Spanta of Afghanistan acknowledged that two decades of violence and political instability caused a severe brain drain of technocrats and professionals, including doctors, lawyers, engineers, scholars, artists and scientists from his country. He added that Afghanistan is placing added emphasis on education and the goal is to ensure a future generation of competent and professional leaders.

The speaker from Pakistan emphasized that terrorism must be fought with education to eliminate ignorance and pointed out a recent agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan. He further underlined the importance of democracy, peace and stability and internal relief through reconstruction. Two generations in Afghanistan have lost their future because of internal conflict.

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