



Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS)

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BENEFITS AND OBLIGATIONS OF COMSATS' MEMBER STATES

Brief Introduction of COMSATS

COMSATS is an intergovernmental organization with 26 developing countries as its Member States, spread across three continents, i.e. Africa, Asia and Latin America. COMSATS' operational mandate is to promote South-South cooperation in Science and Technology for sustainable socio-economic progress. For this purpose, 22 highly reputed R&D Centres in developing countries are affiliated with COMSATS as Centres of Excellence.

Acting as a hub to its working partners, which include academic and research institutions, international development organizations and Governments of several countries, predominantly from the developing world, COMSATS provides unique opportunities for cooperation to its Member Countries. It serves as a platform to mutually identify common developmental problems and, in turn, devise appropriate technical solutions. COMSATS' international meetings/training workshops/seminars/conferences held, from time to time, in its Member Countries are a forum for expert deliberations on critical scientific issues, knowledge-sharing, technology-transfer, and capacity-building, providing an excellent opportunity for students, scientists, engineers, researchers and technicians to discuss the pressing needs of their countries. The organization provides leadership to its Member Countries for mobilizing latest scientific and technological resources in areas having potential for development, such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), Climate and Environmental Sciences, Renewable Energy Technologies, Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Water Resources, etc. Within these areas, COMSATS launches programmes wherein projects are conceptualized, developed and implemented in Member Countries, in consultation with its Focal Points (representatives of Member Governments) and members of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), as well as with the support of COMSATS' Network of International S&T Centres of Excellence and international partner organizations.

Benefits of COMSATS' Membership

The following key benefits are offered to COMSATS' Member Countries:

1. **Membership to COMSATS' Statutory Bodies:**

- The Head of the Government of a Member Country or his representative shall be an ex-officio member of the Commission, which is an apex body for the countries of the South to cooperate for the achievement of sustainable socio-economic development using scientific and technological resources;

- The Focal Point from the designated Ministry of the Member Country shall be the ex-officio member of COMSATS Consultative Committee;
- The Head of an R&D institution of the Member Country affiliated with COMSATS as part of its International Network of S&T Centres of Excellence, shall be a member of the Coordinating Council of COMSATS;
- Scientists and experts from the Member Country are eligible for selection to COMSATS' panel of international consultants, i.e. COMSATS' Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

2. Participation in COMSATS' International Initiatives

- **International Thematic Research Groups:** Scientists of R&D institutions of the Member Countries can participate in, and become members of, the following International Thematic Research Groups of COMSATS that were established with the aim of conducting joint research in a distributed multinational group format:
 - i. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs);
 - ii. Agriculture, Food Security and Biotechnology;
 - iii. Natural Products Sciences;
 - iv. Climate Change and Environmental Protection;
 - v. Materials Science;
 - vi. Mathematical Modeling;
 - vii. Construction Materials; and
 - viii. Space Technology and its Applications.
- **Distinguished Professorship Scheme:** The R&D organizations and universities of Member States can benefit from COMSATS' Distinguished Professorship Scheme, whereby they can benefit from the invited lectures delivered by a group of renowned scientists and professors. The international travel expenses of the Distinguished Professors are borne by COMSATS, whereas local hospitality is offered to them by the host country institution.
- **Panel of Experts on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy:** COMSATS' Member States can seek free consultancy from COMSATS' Panel of Experts on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy on formulating/reviewing their national policies related to science, technology and innovation.

3. Scientific Projects and Programmes:

- Participation in the bilateral technical cooperation projects with any of the internationally renowned Science and Technology Centres of Excellence of COMSATS;
- Participation in technology-transfer programmes as well as Collaborative Research Programmes (CRP) in partnership with international donor/development agencies (e.g. UNESCO, IFS, TWAS, ISESCO, COMSTECH, ICGEB, NAM S&T Centre, etc.);
- Free consultancy by COMSATS' experts for establishing distance education and tele-health services to bring about socio-economic change for the remote and marginalized communities;
- Participation in high-profile policy-making meetings of COMSATS, i.e. General Meetings of the Commission, Consultative Committee meetings and Coordinating Council meetings;

- Monetary assistance for scientific and technological research and development programmes;
- Facilitation for technology transfer (sale/purchase) arrangements.

4. Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing:

- Financial, technical and administrative support for co-organizing joint international and regional workshops/seminars/conferences in accordance with the needs of the Member States to facilitate the enhancement of technical cooperation;
- Opportunities for expert exchange in order to build a critical mass of scientists, engineers and technicians necessary for accelerating socio-economic progress of the developing countries;
- Opportunities for short-term trainings as well as post-graduate studies (Masters and Ph.D.), in various disciplines, at International S&T Centres of Excellence affiliated with COMSATS;
 - Post-graduate scholarships at COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT), Pakistan;
 - Scholarships and training facilities at International Center for Chemical & Biological Sciences (ICCBS), Pakistan;
 - Scholarships and training facilities at International Center for Climate and Environment Sciences (ICCES), China.
- Opportunities for academicians of the Member Countries to join CIIT as Visiting Faculty;
- Travel Grants for scientists/researchers from the Member Countries to attend international workshops, conferences, seminars, etc.

5. Publications:

- The selected R&D institutions of the Member Countries will receive a free copy of the following publications of COMSATS:
 - i. COMSATS Newsletter (bi-monthly);
 - ii. COMSATS' Journal "Science Vision" (bi-annual);
 - iii. COMSATS' Series of Publications on Science and Technology;
 - iv. COMSATS Annual Report.
- R&D institutions of the Member Countries may avail the opportunity of getting their scientific or research content/papers published and their articles/activities reflected in the above-mentioned publications of COMSATS.
- Scientific institutions in the Member Countries will have access to the electronic databases of COMSATS, including COMSATS' official website and other web-portals.

Obligations of COMSATS' Member Countries

In order to gain the membership of COMSATS and avail its benefits, the Member Countries may bear the following obligations:

1. **Signing of an Accession Agreement:**

The Founding Members signed an International Agreement to establish COMSATS. Subsequently, any developing country may join COMSATS by signing an accession agreement.

2. **Annual Membership Contribution (AMC):**

Each Member Country of COMSATS is expected to provide financial support in the form of Annual Membership Contribution (AMC), which is maintained by COMSATS Secretariat as a 'Trust Fund', and is used as seed money to initiate the development activities, programmes, and projects, in collaboration with the international partners, in the concerned Member Country. The AMC is voluntary and is in no way a pre-requisite for accession to COMSATS or continuation of Membership.

3. **Appointment of Focal Point:**

The most relevant Ministry or a high level government institution in the Member Country is to be nominated to act as COMSATS' Focal Point.

4. **Nomination of a Liaison Officer:**

In order to keep close contact with COMSATS Secretariat for scientific collaboration, the Focal Point is required to nominate a Liaison Officer for coordination with COMSATS Secretariat.

5. **Operationalizing South-South Cooperation:**

The Member Countries are expected to designate one or more R&D institutions as COMSATS' Centre of Excellence. The Focal Point may convey to COMSATS, the technological requirements of the country where cooperation is required and also the specified areas in which they can offer technology sharing with other Member States.

6. **Academic Contribution:**

The scientific community of the Member Country is to provide input for COMSATS' scientific publications.

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