

WELCOME SPEECH
by
**DR. S. M. JUNAID ZAIDI, RECTOR, COMSATS INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY (CIIT)**
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It is my immense pleasure and honor to welcome all the distinguished participants from the various COMSATS member countries and the network of different centers of excellence. We greatly acknowledge the fact that all the attending delegates have taken time out of their immensely busy schedules and commitments to attend the nineteenth meeting of the COMSATS Coordinating Council. Hopefully deliberations over the duration of the two-day event would prove fruitful, resulting in important steps and decisions of far reaching import in realizing the true and real potential for which COMSATS was originally envisioned by the great luminary and a global scientist, Professor Abdus Salam. I hope that this particular gathering would serve as a catalyst for strengthening the South-South cooperation on knowledge exchange and creation of new knowledge to serve the socioeconomic needs of the peoples of COMSATS member countries in particular and the humanity at large.

We have the privilege of holding this meeting in the beautiful city of Islamabad. It is a city removed from the hustle and bustle that normally characterizes a typical Asian city. Islamabad is nestled between the majestic Margalla Hills in the North and the bustling city of Rawalpindi to the South. I am sure that you will enjoy your time here and immerse yourselves in the sights and sounds of the capital city. It would not be out of place to mention here that the foundation-conference of COMSATS was held in this very city in 1994. The conference decided that the Headquarters / Secretariat of the Commission would be based permanently in Islamabad and the Head of State of Pakistan would act as the first Chairperson of the forum.

We at the Institute take real pride in the fact that we carry the acronym 'COMSATS' in our name, and have striven hard to live up to and deliver the pristine vision behind the establishment of COMSATS. Owing to the indefatigable zeal of my dedicated team and the talented faculty the institute in less than 16 years of its foundation has grown from a single campus to 8 campuses with 06 Faculties, 18 Departments and around 100 degree programs for the youth of Pakistan and the COMSATS member countries. COMSATS Institute has now firmly reached the threshold of breaking into a new era of growth and success with a vision to be among the best seats of higher learning within the COMSATS network in particular and the world in general.

CIIT is proud to be ranked No. one in the field of Computer Sciences and IT; number two in research productivity; and number three in Pakistan in the General Category, all independently certified by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. CIIT has also distinguished itself to be the only institution of higher education in Pakistan, out of around 180, to have produced the largest number of research publications, precisely 1,452 according to the SCOPUS database, in a single year in 2015. Another singular

honor hard earned by CIIT recently is from the world class index maintained by NATURE, which has placed it at the top of all higher education institutions based on the high quality of its research.

Let me in the end once again welcome you excellencies to Islamabad and assure you that we would do everything within our means to make your stay as comfortable and enjoyable as possible and express my hope that you would have very fruitful deliberations over the next two days.