

Inaugural Address on the 22nd Meeting of COMSATS Council Meeting

Mr. Laiying Yao, Vice Mayor of Tianjin Municipal Government

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Respected Dr. Junaid Zaidi, COMSATS Executive Director

Respected Prof. Shaalan, Chairperson Coordinating Council

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentleman,

Good morning! Spring is a beautiful season of new beginnings. Today more than 50 guests from 18 countries are gathering in Tianjin to carry out discussions and exchanges on strengthening scientific and technological cooperation and promoting socio-economic sustainable development for the South. On behalf of the Tianjin Municipal Government and Mayor Mr. Zhang Guoqing, I would like to extend warm congratulations on the successful convening of the meeting and sincere welcome to all distinguished guests travelling afar to Tianjin.

Nowadays, a new round of global scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation are flourishing. Innovation has increasingly become the most important and lasting driving force of economic growth, which has become a common understanding of all countries in the world. Chinese General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed that innovation should be the first driving force for development, and that China should have joined the ranks of innovative countries by 2020, laying the foundation for building China into an innovative country and a scientific and technological power in the world. With the deepening of economic globalization and

the more active transnational flow of innovation elements and resources, all countries in the world, especially developing countries, should seek opportunities in international innovation and achieve win-win cooperation through mutual learning.

As an influential international organization in developing countries, COMSATS has made outstanding contributions to South-South cooperation, scientific and technological research and development since its establishment 25 years ago. The Tianjin Municipal Government, in close cooperation with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, is relying on the National Technology Innovation Center for Synthetic Biology proposed and established by Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology to promote a major breakthrough in synthetic biotechnology. Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology has become COMSATS 22nd Center of Excellence and the 2nd such center hosted by Chinese Academy of Sciences in China. We are deeply honored to host this meeting in Tianjin. As one of the four municipalities directly under the Central Government of China, Tianjin has abundant scientific and technological resources. It has laid out a number of key national laboratories and innovation centers, nurtured a large number of leading scientific and technological enterprises, and its comprehensive strength of scientific and technological innovation has always been in the forefront of the country. We are eager to strengthen communication and cooperation with COMSATS, through which we can help Tianjin's scientific and technological achievements “go global” and take root and bear fruits in all member countries.

Tianjin is the joint of sea and land on “The Belt and Road” Initiative, and an important node of the new Eurasian Continental Bridge economic corridor. In order to seize the historic opportunity, Tianjin has initiated the Action Plan for the Belt and Road Science Technology and Innovation Cooperation, and established a special planning for scientific and technological innovation cooperation. I encourage the participants of the meeting to take an active part in the Action Plan. Tianjin will make every effort to build a platform for international cooperation and collaborative innovation, and jointly promote the construction of Belt and Road, so as to enhance the scientific and technological innovation ability of all member states and achieve quality sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen! Tianjin is an open coastal city with great potential. And COMSATS Coordinating Council is an important mechanism to promote South-South cooperation. I hope that all participants will be inspired by the experiences and creative ideas shared by each other, through discussions and brain-storming. And I also hope that you can deepen your understanding of Tianjin and come to Tianjin for innovation and entrepreneurship. We are willing to work hand in hand with you to contribute wisdom and strength to the sustainable development for the South.

I sincerely wish the meeting be a very productive and successful one, and all participants have a nice and enjoyable stay in Tianjin.

Thank you.