

Inaugural Speech at the 22nd Meeting of COMSATS

Coordinating Council

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Ministry of Science and Technology, China

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Respected Executive Director Dr. S. M. Junaid Zaidi,

Prof. Chairperson Dr. Ashraf Shaalan,

Deputy Mayor Yao Laiying,

Deputy Director General Li Yin,

Dr. Ma Yanhe,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning! It is my pleasure to attend today's 22nd Meeting of COMSATS Coordinating Council. On behalf of Ministry of Science and Technology of China, I would like to extend my congratulations to the convening of the meeting, and my sincere welcome to all participants. I also would like to express my gratitude to COMSATS, the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South, and Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (TIB) on jointly organizing this meeting.

COMSATS, as an international intergovernmental organization to

promote the development of science and technology in the third world, has been established for more than 20 years. It has successfully utilized human, scientific and technological resources to guide the fruitful development of various plans and activities in 22 Centers of Excellence on four continents, providing a platform for the exchange of achievements and policies in relevant fields of science and technology, and promoting the sustainable development of society and economy of member countries.

China has been a member country of COMSATS and sound cooperation has been established since 1990's. Under the guidance of our Ministry, Chinese institutions such as the International Center for Climate and Environmental Sciences (ICCES), Institute of Atmospheric Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, have been actively engaged in organizing and participating in COMSATS activities. As one of the Centers of Excellence, ICCES participated in the Coordinating Council meetings hold by COMSATS every year and hosted two of them. In addition, ICCES has organized a number of international projects under the framework of COMSATS, such as leading the "Climate Change and Environmental Protection" thematic research project, co-chairing the long-term cooperation research and development project between the Chinese and Pakistani governments, and so on. In terms of personnel exchange and training, we have also organized several exchanges of visits of scientists, training workshops and supported young scholars from COMSATS member countries to pursue doctoral degrees in China, which

has enhanced the scientific and technological capacity building of developing countries. Last year, our Ministry funded the ICCES jointly hosting a training workshop for land-hydrological processes under changing climate. In 2017, with the support of COMSATS, Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology, Chinese Academy of Sciences -today's host- has become the 22nd Center of Excellence. We sincerely hope that with more Chinese institutions joined the COMSATS network, more practical achievements will emerge.

In 2017, our President Xi announced initiating the *Action Plan for the Belt and Road Science Technology and Innovation Cooperation*, consisting of 4 actions: people-to-people exchanges, build joint laboratories, science park cooperation and technology transfer. In the next five years, we will arrange 2500 young scientists to come to China for short-term scientific research, train 5000 scientific, technical and managing personnels, and establish 50 joint laboratories. Now our Ministry, together with other departments, is actively pushing forward the initiative. I will make a detailed introduction in the following session. I hope that the member countries of COMSATS and the Centers of Excellence Network could actively join in this initiative. South-South cooperation is an indispensable component of international multilateral cooperation for development, an important channel for developing countries to self-reliance and progress, and an effective means to ensure the effective integration and participation of developing countries in the world economy. Pragmatic scientific and technological cooperation is one

of the most important parts of South-South cooperation. As one of the largest developing countries in the world, China attaches great importance to South-South cooperation. China is willing to work with COMSATS member countries to promote cooperation among member countries and even all developing countries to a higher level and a deeper level. I believe, through our joint efforts, the collaborations between China and COMSATS and its member countries will witness a more prosperous future.

Tianjin, the first batch of coastal open cities, the national advanced manufacturing and R&D base, the core area of international shipping in the north, the Pioneer Area of reform and opening up and also a famous historical city with special cultural charm. I suggest you take some time to visit the city and also the TIB during your stay in Tianjin.

I believe this meeting will provide opportunities for further the cooperation among COMSATS Centers of Excellence and between China and COMSATS. Finally, on behalf of our Ministry, I would like to express our strong support to ICCES and TIB for carrying cooperation with COMSATS. I sincerely wish the meeting be a very productive and successful one, and all participants have a nice and enjoyable stay in Tianjin.