

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH (COMSATS)**

**24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of COMSATS Coordinating Council**  
*(25-26 January 2023, Karachi, Pakistan)*

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**COMMUNIQUÉ**

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The 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of COMSATS Coordinating Council was held on 25-26 January 2023, at the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), Karachi. The participants deliberated upon the fourteen-point agenda and are pleased to unanimously adopt the following:

1. The Coordinating Council is pleased with the role played by the COMSATS Secretariat for following up the decisions made at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Council meeting, which was held online amid peak time of COVID19 pandemic. The Annual Activity Report presented by the Executive Director COMSATS is highly appreciated.
2. The academic, research and capacity-building activities undertaken by Centres of Excellence during the period since the last Council meeting are highly appreciated.
3. The Council is pleased to learn about the establishment of COMSATS Joint Centre on Industrial Biotechnology (CCIB), at the Tianjin Institute of Industrial Biotechnology (TIB), in April 2021, in order to promote meaningful cooperation among the COMSATS' Member Countries and Centres of Excellence in the field of industrial biotechnology. The Joint Centre was established by COMSATS and TIB with financial support of the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology and Tianjin Government under the framework of the National Center of Technology Innovation for Synthetic Biology (NC SynBio) of China, which is highly appreciated. The Centre's activities pertaining to facilitating collaborative research and development activities, academic exchanges, personnel training, etc., in areas of Biomedicine, Bio-Agriculture, Future Food, Biomaterials, Biochemicals and Bioenergy, are noted with great admiration.
4. Recognizing the significance of the linkages between climate change and sustainable development, the Council is pleased to note with appreciation the progress made by the COMSATS Centre for Climate and Sustainability (CCCS). The Council is pleased that 19 Centres of Excellence have so far joined the CCCS network and are actively participating in the same.
5. The Council appreciates the holding of over 50 physical or online capacity building events in collaboration with Centres of Excellence and international partner organizations, which benefited the scientists, researchers, academicians, engineers and technicians belonging to the Member States.

6. Regular publication of COMSATS' Annual Report, Newsletter and other information material brought out by COMSATS during the reporting period deserves praise. The inputs and support of the Centres of Excellence in this regard is highly appreciated.
7. One of the positive externalities of COVID19 pandemic was the focus shift towards digitalization, which also calls for COMSATS to drastically change its modus operandi and make use of virtual means for its operations. The decisions made by the Council viz the initiatives of creating web-portal, dashboard, and video documentaries of Centres of Excellence is a welcome step in the right direction. Moreover, the Council agrees to hold virtual meetings more often to expeditiously follow up on its decisions and to maintain strong interconnectivity.
8. The Council welcomed the following new initiatives proposed by the Executive Director COMSATS:
  - a. Establishment of COMSATS International Centre of Excellence (CICE)
  - b. Dedicated effort towards Launching of COMSATS Satellite
  - c. Renewable Energy Solutions for COMSATS
  - d. Establishment of a Model COMSATS Solarized Precision Agriculture Green House
  - e. Initiation of collaborative programmes for digital skills development of youth;
  - f. Establishment of R&D fund to support projects of commercial value;
  - g. Developing a Comprehensive COMSATS Resource Persons Directory
9. The Secretariat is advised to revive its activities related to Repair and Maintenance of Scientific Engineering Equipments, as well as Internet Security in Member Countries. Demand driven Extension of COMSATS' Tele-health Programme to other member countries was recommended.
10. The Council is pleased to learn that the 4th meeting of COMSATS Consultative Committee was held (online) on 11th November 2020, in which delegates from 19 member countries participated. It is highly important that governments of Member States, through the forum of Consultative Committee, may support the projects, programmes and collaborative undertakings initiated at the level of COMSATS Network. The outcomes of COMSATS' programmes and activities shall be regularly shared with the governments of Member States (COMSATS Consultative Committee)
11. The Coordinating Council unanimously decided that Prof. Dr. Ashraf Shaalan continues as Chairperson for another term of three years (2023 - 2026), and hopes that he continues to provide new thrust to the Network with regard to achieving its overall objectives. The Council also appreciated the leadership he provided during the earlier two successive terms (2016 – 2022).
12. The Council welcomes the new members of the Technical Advisory Committee and looks forward to their valuable advice and guidance regarding various programmes and activities of the organization. The Technical Advisory Committee has been

reconstituted since the three-year tenure of its previous members completed during August 2020.

13. The payment of AMC by China, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Nigeria and Pakistan during the period since the last Council meeting is also noted with appreciation. The Council encourages all other Network members to sensitize their respective governments regarding the importance of regularly making AMC for the financial sustainability of COMSATS.
  14. The Coordinating Council appreciates the excellent arrangements made by the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), for the 24th Council meeting and for providing generous hospitality to its participants. The preparation of necessary documentation by COMSATS Secretariat and the administrative support provided to ICCBS for the successful organization of the meeting is praiseworthy.
  15. The Council appreciated the Embassy of China in Pakistan for arranging a special session on China's Leadership Role for Developing Countries on 27th January 2023 for the benefit of Network members. The Centres of Excellence are urged to benefit from the opportunities of collaboration available in this regard.
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