

CONCLUDING REMARKS

H.E. Mr. Awad Mohamed Hasan
Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan to Pakistan

Dr. Hameed Ahmed Khan, Executive Director
COMSATS,

Mrs. Zam Abdul Karim, Deputy Director, Science and
Technology, Ministry of Science, Technology and
Environment, Malaysia,

Mr. Rugumire-Makuza, Emmanuel, Makerere
University, Center of Basic Research, Kampala,
Uganda,

Distinguished guests and participants,

Assalam-o-Alaikum.

I would like to thank Dr. Hameed Ahmed Khan,
Executive Director COMSATS, for the invitation
extended to me to address this august gathering. It
is really a pleasure and indeed an honour for me to
address the scientists of our nations in the concluding
session of the meeting on S&T capacity-building.

I have to confess that I am not a scientist; so as a
very common and ordinary man I would like to give
some suggestions and present my views. I am glad
that my turn as speaker came after Dr. Hameed Ahmed
Khan, who delivered a lengthy speech, which
summarized the works of the last two days, and gave
his comments and conclusions. Therefore, I don't have
to say anything in detail; however, I would like to
highlight three main points.

My first point, which my colleague H.E. the
Ambassador of Bosnia would agree with, is that if we
want to write a comprehensive report—a reliable
report—I don't think we can accomplish it, unless we
take a quick glance at our computer. One day I was
here at COMSATS and saw a demonstration in which
a doctor from Islamabad was diagnosing a patient
from a very remote area in a village. He analyzed and
gave the prescription to the patient, with whom he
was interacting via tele-health services. I believe the
use of science and technology is as important for us
diplomats, engineers, in fact all professionals, as it
is for medical practitioners. This is not only true for
those professions whom we call white-collar

professions, but is also true for all other professions.
I also attended a session in which there was a
demonstration of a system that Pakistan had
developed, through which a farmer who could not read
or write can gain access to Internet and get the
information that he requires i.e. information about
weather, markets, middlemen, etc.

So, even the layman needs science and technology
to do his work. Not only that, but also if we simply
talk of watching television in our leisure time, we
cannot entertain ourselves without making use of
science and modern technology. Even the toys of our
children work with technology. I want to conclude this
point by saying that we need S&T in all walks of life
of the modern age of today.

But there is another point that I would like to highlight.
Countries like Japan, Belgium and the Netherlands
do not have substantial natural resources. In fact they
have virtually nothing compared to the natural
resources that countries like Pakistan and Sudan
have. Yet, these countries are far more developed than
us. The cutting edge that these countries have is that
they groom, invest and utilize their human resources
effectively, while, on the other hand, we do not make
such efforts. It is a sorry state of affairs that, so far,
we have been unable to capitalize on our human
resources; however we have initiated the process and
there is some hope.

I also listened carefully to one of the presentations
delivered by H.E. Dr. Atta ur Rehman, when he was
the Minister for Science and Technology. Dr. Rehman
presented a very startling comparison. He said that
all the GDP of the comity of Islamic nations is less
than the GDP of Belgium. Correct me if I am wrong,
Dr. Khan, but I believe he said something more or
less like that. My point in quoting this example is to
emphasize that the future wealth and economic
prosperity of a country is exactly determined by its
ability to utilize and access the information of science
and technology.

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The third point that I would like to highlight is that it is understood that attaining prowess in science and technology requires the help of governments. I hope that politicians and relevant policy-makers adopt and implement the related recommendations made during this meeting, and I am sure they will. As I see here, with the Grace of God, Pakistan is a force which can lead the developing countries, especially ones from the comity of Muslim nations, by guiding them through the era of information technology.

COMSATS has been very keen in facilitating capacity-building in its member countries. Many projects with

Sudan have already been initiated, such as the Industrial Information Network (IIN), establishment of an IT Centre and Tele-Health Centre, while many projects are in the pipeline. I am sure COMSATS also has a plan of action for developing indigenous capacities with other member countries.

In the end, I would like to thank Dr. Hameed Ahmed Khan and his colleagues, who have assumed a pioneering and guiding role and are steadfastly taking us through the era of science and technology. With these remarks I would like to thank you.