

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

# **In the Name of Allah**

## **Science and Technology Policy in I.R. Iran**

Guests of Honour,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I am delighted to speak at this Regional Forum on Science and Technology Policy for Sustainable Development, organized with the kind collaboration of UNESCO, in the presence of international organizations, officials and experts from regional countries.

- We are aware that one of the major factors for marginal science and technology development in the developing countries is the lack of planning and management of these activities. Thus far, only a few developing countries have attempted to formulate and adopt a suitable national science and technology policy.

- As a matter of fact, it is recognized that a good and appropriate policy of science and technology will enhance economic wealth, shared prosperity and social and cultural endowments in developing and emerging countries.

- Many of the developing countries are recently focusing on this matter taking into account the experiences of other countries and the potential and resources of their own nation.

- In a similar way, the Islamic Republic of Iran now recognizes that accelerating the pace of social and economic development cannot be tackled without the help of an appropriate science and technology policy. It is, therefore, essential to provide high national priority to scientific and technological considerations in the over-all development strategy of the country.

- The national constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran itself puts a clear emphasis on the science and technology development and urges the government to create the necessary conditions for the science and technology uplift of the country.

- The Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, in 2002, was restructured and renamed as the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. This change makes this new ministry responsible for the policy-making, supervision, evaluation and coordination among institutions while giving more freedom to the science, research and technology institutions in order to provide a better climate for constructive competition.

- In this context, authorities consider it appropriate to work on a new formulation of a comprehensive and coherent national policy necessary for the effective application of science and technology in the country. This reformulation will enable the country to refresh and strengthen its resolution for the development of science and technology and identify strategic tasks needed to establish a national strategy that will ensure a dynamic country for the future.

- Besides short-term policies, the ministry considered long-term policies to attain scientific and technological competence to help increase production and employment in various sectors and sub-sectors of the economy.

- The first priority is the development of educational and research institutions, development of existing institutions such as universities, creation of science and technology parks and incubators, supply of technical and laboratory equipment, improvement of library services and information technology, application of research results. It also includes specialization in specified science and technology fields, creation of special research and technology funds.

- Another emphasis in the short-term policy is the creation of institutions or centres, which will provide facilities at the highest level and undertake major projects relevant to national development needs.

- Other priority is the training of human resources with the creation of short and long-term professional and technical training courses. The ministry is to develop mechanisms and programmes for professional and technical updating so as to train specialized personnel required to cover all the links in the chain that relate research and development to products and marketing.

- We emphasize also the promotion of platforms such as this Regional Forum, encouraging science, research and educational centers to expand their memberships and activities with international and regional organizations.

- On the other hand, the government is also providing better opportunities for high-level scientists and is to ensure the economic and social well being of scientists and provide an attractive and well-equipped research environment.

- Science and technology based industry should be identified as a major source of economic growth and a means of addressing important social problems as well. The government is promoting applied research and strengthening the link with industry. Coordination is the main target and concern in long term science and technology policy.

- In view of this, the new Ministry of Science, Research and Technology shall play the role of central coordinating agency. It would advise the Government on selected areas of research and development which would help realize the stated objective meant to accelerate economic recovery and then assign these areas of research and development to the specific institutions best equipped to carry them to a successful completion and ensure their high performance.

- The institutions for scientific education and research oriented, professors, well-equipped laboratories, modern libraries and databases within these institutions, constitute the minimum requirements of a scientific infrastructure any developing country must provide for.

- In order to establish this infrastructure then, the support and funding for these institutions should be increased. In this context, the government is implementing new policies by first securing funds for research and development from GNP from less than 1 (in 2005) to 2.5% ( end of the Fourth Five Year Development Plan, 2009) increasing the number of scientists to 2000 per each million people, strengthening and enforcing the Intellectual Property system, promoting the transfer of technology and know-how, supporting the international cooperation, identifying and defining priorities in particular in the field of new advanced technologies such as nanotechnology, biotechnology and aero-space technology, reviewing the regulations regarding the cycle science, technology and production, putting special attention to the factor of ethics and environment in research programmes.

- With a view to ensuring the implementation of this new strategy, in a coordinated manner, the Government constituted the Supreme Council of Science, Research and Technology. The Supreme Council of Science, Research and Technology (SCSRT) has its own councils each one specialized in a particular field.

- The creation of the SCSRT shall permit the concretization and materialization of the new national science and technology policy. This coordination shall also permit a better utilization of the national potential and improve information sharing to achieve a better and sustainable national development.

- **Science and Technology policy can take many forms and develop in a multitude of directions. The government identifies priorities, some of them are:**
  - ❖ To provide the right environment to encourage innovation by enforcing the Intellectual Property Rights system.
  - ❖ To ensure that national science and technology programmes are aligned and corresponds to the national development programmes.

- ❖ To make a better use of the natural resources and make a shift toward a non reliance on national natural resources.
- ❖ To promote international cooperation and get continuously informed on the last science and technology achievements.
- ❖ To encourage entrepreneurship in the country through accurate feasibility studies, market evaluations, business, information and legal consultations.
- ❖ To give a special attention to human resources as they are the principal actor for science and technology development. Manpower training is an essential condition for technical progress.

- ❖ To ensure adequate resources for the effective implementation of science and technology policies by allocating enough investments and implementing serious financial mechanisms.
- ❖ To encourage the involvement of the private sector in the national development process.
- ❖ To keep pace with the fast advancing technologies and develop information technology in different sectors.
- ❖ To create a strategic policy that encourages and promotes the use of ICTs for producing useful knowledge, improving productivity and raise quality.

I am pleased to see here the presence of national and international experts of this field in this forum, and I am convinced that this gathering will be stimulating and productive and its results and deliberations would be formulated and made available, to the S & T Policy – making bodies in the countries of the region. We do hope that this Forum will lead to more studies and contribute to further development in the definition of science and technology policy in our countries.

I finally thank the organizers of this Forum ,  
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