

**International Conference on
S&T Policy Research and Statistical Indicators
Colombo (Sri Lanka), November 8-10, 2006**

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES: 16 (Including 11 member Countries of the NAM S&T Centre)

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 69 participants of the Conference from 16 countries and 2 international organizations included 24 overseas experts and professionals

The science and technology system of a country has to be infused with new vitality if it is to play a decisive and beneficial role in advancing the well being of all sections of society. The national S&T policies and their implementation should adjust to the new global realities and also satisfy social and economic goals. The issue is how to facilitate innovation-led growth to develop relevant technologies or enable industry to acquire and adapt technology from abroad. Many developing countries are at the crossroad in understanding the implication of new policy contexts and create S&T policies that are interlinked with production and service sectors, competition and other national public policies. The decision makers in developing countries are in need of more and better information for the formulation and implementation of S&T policies including data on S&T statistics and indicators related to expenditures and human resources devoted to R&D, education of R&D personnel, measurement of technological innovation, and S&T outputs like publications, patents, technologies developed and commercialized technological balance of payments and high-tech trade.

With the aforementioned in view, the NAM S&T Centre with the approval of its Governing Council organised a 3-day International Conference on “S&T Policy Research and Statistical Indicators” at Galle Face Hotel in Colombo, Sri Lanka during 08-10 November 2006 in association with the National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Science and Technology Commission (NASTEC) of Sri Lanka.

During the Inaugural Session, after lighting of the traditional oil lamp, Prof. Sirimali Fernando, Chairperson, NSF made the welcome remarks and Prof. Dr. Arun P. Kulshreshtha, Director, NAM S&T Centre gave an introductory address highlighting the background of the programme and explaining the role being played by the NAM S&T Centre in the promotion of S&T cooperation amongst the developing countries. Hon. Prof. Tissa Vitarana, Minister of Science & Technology, Government of Sri Lanka gave the inaugural address on “Globalisation: Implications for Change in the S&T System and Harnessing Benefits from New Technologies” and inaugurated the Conference. The inaugural function ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. Ranil D. Gunarantne, Director/CEO, NASTEC.

Sixty nine participants of the Conference from 16 countries and 2 international organizations included 24 overseas experts and professionals from Cuba [Dr. Vito Quevedo, Director, Technology and Innovation, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Havana], Egypt [Mrs. Janet Ibrahim Yousef, President, Innovation

Development Agency, Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT), Cairo], Ghana [Mr. Sylvester Gyamfi, Principal Statistician, Ministry of Ministry of Economic Planning, Accra], India [Dr. Praveen Arora, Director, NSTMIS Division, Department of Science and Technology, New Delhi; Dr. Naresh Kumar, Head, Research and Development Planning Division, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi; Dr. Vinod Kumar Gupta, Scientist, National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies, New Delhi; and Dr. Rajeswari Sarala Raina, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi], Indonesia [Dr. Dudi Hidayat, Head, Division for S&T Policy Research, Centre for S&T Development Studies, Indonesian Institutes for Sciences], Iran [Dr. Seyed Mohsen Masoumzadeh, Head, Division of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Iranian Research Organization for Science and Technology (IROST), Research Institute for Technological Development Studies, Tehran], Kenya [Dr. Lutta W. Muhamad, Senior Research Officer, Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, Socio-economics and Biometrics Division, Nairobi], Malaysia [Mr. Kamaruhzama Bin Mat Zin, Principal Assistant Director, Malaysian S&T Information Centre (MASTIC), Putrajaya; and Mr. Abu Kasim Bin Ali, Deputy Director, Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI), Economics and Technology Management Research Centre, Kuala Lumpur], Myanmar [Dr. Thida, Lecturer, Department of Technical and Vocational Education, Yangon], Nepal [Mr. Dilli Raj Joshi, Officer, S&T Policy Research Unit, Nepal Academy of Science and Technology, Kathmandu], Nigeria [Mr. Ettu Obassi, Scientific Officer, Raw Material Research & Development Council (RMRDC), Abuja], Pakistan [Dr. Tariq Bashir, Deputy Chief Science, Pakistan Council for Science and Technology, Islamabad; and Mr. Imran Jahangir, Deputy Director, P&D Section, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad], South Africa [Mr. Simon Mpele, Manager, Policy Investigations, National Advisory Council of Innovation, Department of Science and Technology, Pretoria]; Tanzania [Mr. Juma Hamsini Seph, Agricultural Engineer, Ministry of Higher Education, Science & Technology], Thailand [Dr. Patcharee Siroros and Dr. Kenneth J. Haller, Associate Professors, School of Chemistry, Suranaree University of Technology], UNESCO [Mr. Ernesto Fernandez Polcuch, Programme Specialist, UIS, Montreal, Canada] and NAM S&T Centre [Prof. Arun P. Kulshreshtha, Director and Mr. M. Bandyopadhyay, Senior Expert & Administrative Officer].

The Conference was conducted in five technical sessions spread over 2½ days. The first session was devoted to a Panel Discussion on “New Vision and Governance”, which was presided over by Dr. R. D Gunarantne, Director/CEO, NASTEC. The Panelists were Dr. T. Siyambalapitiya, Dr. C. R. Panabokke, Dr. Jerry Jayawardene, Prof. Narada Warnasuriya, Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne, Eng. M. W. Leelaratne and Mr. B. R. L. Fernando, who delivered talks on Energy, Water, Food, Nutrition, Health, Shelter and Trade & Industry respectively.

The deliberations in the remaining sessions had the focus on “Strategies and Mechanisms for Implementation”, “S&T Statistics and Indicators”, “S&T Policy Research Experiences” and “Looking Ahead”, and were Chaired by Mr. Mevan Pieris, President, Institute of Chemistry, Ceylon / Mr. Ernesto Fernandez Polcuch, Programme Specialist, UIS, Montreal, Canada; Dr. Gamini De Silva, Director, Department of Census & Statistics, Sri Lanka / Dr. Rajeswari Sarala Raina, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, India; Prof. Nalini Ratnasiri, Chairperson, NASTEC, Sri

Lanka / Dr. Tariq Bashir, Deputy Chief Science, Pakistan Council for Science and Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan; and Dr. U. Pethiyagoda, Consultant Agronomist from Sri Lanka / Dr. Naresh Kumar, Head, Research and Development Planning Division, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi, respectively.

In these sessions, the overseas participants as well as three scientists from Sri Lanka, namely, Dr. Bandula Perera, Additional Director General, Board of Investment, Colombo; Dr. Seetha I. Wickremasinghe, Head, S&T Policy Research Division, NSF; and Dr. P.R.M.P. Dilrukshi, Scientific Officer of the same Division at NSF presented country status reports and scientific papers on topics relevant to the Conference.

At the end of the Technical Sessions on 10th Nov. 2006, a brief Concluding Session was chaired by Prof. Arun P. Kulshreshtha, Director, NAM S&T Centre, in which Mr. M.A.T. De Silva, S&T Policy Consultant and Dr (Ms) Janaki Gunaratne Senior Research Officer, Industrial Technology Institute, presented a summary of the deliberations and recommendations of the Conference. It was recommended that in view of the fast changing scenario in S&T policy and developments in various countries and in order to update the information in the relevant fields, such interaction must be continued and similar conferences may be organized at regular intervals under the banner of the NAM S&T Centre with an active participation and financial assistance from UNESCO/UIS. It was also suggested that a network might be created for on-line exchange of information and coordinating various collaborative activities including organization of seminars and conferences on S&T Policy and Statistical Indicators.

The participants complimented Dr. M. C. N. Jayasuriya, Director, National Science Foundation (NSF), Sri Lanka for the successful and fruitful organization of the Conference and for the excellent hospitality extended and arrangements made for the delegates. They expressed deep gratitude for the keen personal interest taken by Hon. Professor Tissa Vitarana, Minister of Science & Technology of Sri Lanka for the Conference.

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