ISTS Planning Meeting for the

Arab States Sustainability Roundtable

Third World Academy of Sciences

12-13 June 2003

Trieste, Italy

TWAS and ISTS acknowledge the support from a grant from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences in cooperation with the Middle East Initiative at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation for the Initiative on Science and Technology for Sustainability
Final Programme

Wednesday 11 June

19:30  Welcome buffet (Adriatico Guesthouse)

Thursday, 12 June

09.00 Welcoming remarks
  M.H.A. Hassan, TWAS
  A.A. Al-Shamlan, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science
  Jill Jäger, Initiative on Science and Technology for Sustainability
  Brief introductions by the participants

09.45 Summary of previous workshop and roundtable activities in ISTS (Jill Jäger)
  Characteristics of Arab Countries: Overview (Mohamed Hassan)

10.30 Coffee break

11.00  Millennium Development Goals in the Arab Region. (Gaith Fariz)

11.45  Defining the objectives of the Arab States Roundtable
         Discussion on agenda of the Arab States Roundtable

12.30 Lunch break

14.00 Discussion on funding possibilities of the Arab States Roundtable

15.30 Coffee break

16.00 Discussion on potential participants of the Arab State Roundtable

18.00 Adjourn

19.30 Official Dinner (Adriatico Guesthouse)
Friday 13 June

09.00 Summary of previous day’s discussion

09.30 Next steps for the organization of the Arab States Roundtable
    - timing
    - place
    - contacting participants
    - funding applications
    - background materials

10.30 Coffee break

12.30 End of meeting

12.30-12.45 Pick up from AGH to Main Building Cafeteria

13.00 ICTP Lunch (with UN Ambassador delegation)
Final List of Participants

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Sustainability Roundtable, 12-13 June 2003, Trieste, Italy

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Conclusions

1) The Roundtable should provide a forum for local and regional discussions on enhancing the contributions of Science and Technology to meet the challenges of Sustainable Development. Participants would be invited and attend in their personal capacity and not as representatives of organizations, Ministries etc. Participation will be by invitation only.

2) The objectives of the Roundtable will be to:

- Strengthen the contributions of S & T to SD
  - Create and support adequate enabling environments for scientific research.
  - Act as a catalyst for networking and create linkages to share success stories about the role of S&T in meeting the challenges of sustainable development.
  - Identify centers of excellence in the Arab region and mobilize resources from national and international funding sources to them.
  - Strengthen the use of existing scientific knowledge.
  - Enhance education and training.
  - Identify gaps, barriers and institutional arrangements needed to address critical issues.

- Develop partnerships
  - Increase the support of Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region and encourage the linkages between the international donor community and the S&T community.
  - Support appropriate technology at the local level and encourage partnerships in technology for innovative initiatives.
  - Involve the private sector in the definition of the research agendas and create partnerships for funding purposes and for stimulating the research.
- Work with the private sector in order to increase awareness of the challenges of sustainable development and stimulate their involvement in technological solutions for sustainability.

- Identify mechanisms to increase interaction between the development, scientific and policy communities.

Thematic priorities

- The Roundtable will focus on priorities for sustainable development that are consistent with the UN’s Millennium Development Goals: promoting social and economic development while conserving natural resources and the environment. Within that framework, the Roundtable will focus on needs and opportunities of particular relevance to the Arab States, while recognizing that details will differ within the region according to local realities.

- In particular, it will explore how the challenges of accelerating economic growth, relieving poverty, and enhancing human capital [health, education, gender equality] in the region can be met while at the same time relieving environment and resource problems associated with water deficits, desertification, and biodiversity loss. Special attention will be given to the cross-cutting themes of governance and policy for science and technology in addressing these priorities.

3) Proposed format for the Roundtable:

- Three day meeting.
- 30 participants.
- Keynote addresses to raise issues.
- The speakers should provide one to three pages before the meeting and then will act as facilitators of the discussion.
- The discussions should lead to a set of recommendations from the meeting, including recommendations on follow up and indicators of success.
- On the third day in the morning the recommendations will be discussed and finalized. In the afternoon they should be presented to high-level political leaders of the host country. The participants will also be requested to take these recommendations back to their home country and ensure wide distribution. Dissemination to international organizations will also be important.
- Coverage/sponsorship of one of the big TV networks of the region is suggested.
- A distinguished Arab Scientist should be invited to give a public lecture on the day before the Roundtable.
- A well prepared media campaign should be organized.

4) Funding

- An estimated amount of $200,000 is envisaged.
- Small and Big Private sponsors should be contacted on the basis of draft budget and outlines of the Roundtable.
- Possible funders include Arab Thought Forum, OPEC Fund for International Development, Kuwait Oil Company, Islamic Bank of Development, BP Regional Office, etc.
- The host institution at the selected venue should be able to provide support for the Roundtable covering local costs, if possible (accommodation and meals); and assistance with the media campaign and the public lecture.
- Possible venues for the meeting include Alexandria Library (offer made by I. Serageldin), Arab Fund, Arabian Gulf University in Bahrain (proposed by Mr. Hamza), Dubai and Beirut (in collaboration with the National Council for Scientific Research; proposed by Mr. Saab). The official invitation to the possible hosts from the co-chairs of the Planning Group will include a draft budget and draft outline of the Roundtable.

5) Timing

- In principle (depending on the results of the funding search and the requirements of the selected venue), the Roundtable could take place in April or May 2004.

6) Criteria for selection of participants.

- There shall be a three-tier representation from the development, S&T and policy-making communities.

- The agreed general selection criteria are based on relevant expertise on the Roundtable themes, balancing natural sciences, social sciences, development, R&D in industry) and country balance, gender balance, age balance, NGO-Civil Society, and, very important, ability and willingness to act.

7) Participants suggested the names of potential participants to the Roundtable listed in the Appendix. Members of the planning group
will send further names in the weeks after this planning meeting. This list should be treated confidentially. The letter of invitation should clearly state that participants will not be expected to make statements on behalf of the organizations to which they belong and that the report of the roundtable will not attribute statements to individuals.

8) After the planning meeting, the “Planning Group” will continue to provide inputs to the organization of the Roundtable, especially in selecting the venue, organizing and implementing the funding of the roundtable and finalizing the list of participants. ISTS/TWAS will continue to provide Secretariat functions. One committed member from the private sector should be invited to join the Planning Group.

Diego Malpede
Jill Jäger
Trieste, 13 June 2003