



## 2 Day Vice Chancellors' Forum on Higher Education in the Islamic World: Challenges and Opportunities

June 11-12, 2012 Islamabad - Pakistan

The COMSATS Institute of Information Technology; the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO); Higher Education Commission, Pakistan and the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of Pakistan are organizing a 2-Day Vice Chancellor's Forum on "Higher Education in the Islamic World: Challenges and Opportunities". The Forum is scheduled to be held on June 11-12, 2012 at Islamabad, Pakistan. The venue of the Forum is Serena Hotel, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Higher education landscape is continuously changing; more so in the Islamic world in the recent decades. It is being influenced by factors ranging from culture, economics and politics to technology. The university as an institution is usually entrenched quite deep in the society. Its vision, mission, autonomy, the quality of stakeholders' participation, availability and use of human and financial resources, priority in teaching and research, emphasis on entrepreneurship and commercialization, and so forth raises expectations from its intended role as well as places it under the vigil of public scrutiny. A role model university in the 21<sup>st</sup> century carries significance for ensuring innovative, inclusive and progressive development of individuals, nation states, regions and the world society, at large.

Knowledge creation, dissemination and its diffusion is central to promoting knowledge-based socio-economic growth. Effective knowledge management is an increasingly important source of gaining competitive advantage. Staffed with experts, the university is better placed to cope with newer challenges and help in re-aligning the multifarious societal institutions in allowing them accomplish their intended yet ever demanding roles.

The rapid pace of globalization advances economic and social reforms. Together with this, the technological advancement is creating dramatic shifts in the structure of markets throughout the world. Being one of the key custodians of societal aspirations, the higher education as an institution needs to contribute in the creation of indigenous capacity for science and technology driven economic progress. The shift from largely domestic activities to more complex international relationships demands crafting and implementing policies that seek to integrate science and technology into economic strategies.

Quality assurance in higher education while ensuring the quality itself, provides basis for public accountability as well as the much needed equivalence standards in the era of globalization. Quality assurance is though not secular. It creates tensions and conflicts; the ones among the explosion, fragmentation and stabilizing demand, equal access and opportunity, institutional autonomy and so forth. The cross border emulation needs adaptation to honour sensitivity to the cultural and social norms.

The Forum would dilate on issues including but not limited to the following:

- a) Governance;
- b) Knowledge Management;
- c) Science, Technology and Innovation; and
- d) Quality Assurance.

The specific objectives of the Forum include:

- a) To help establish linkages and promote networking among the participating universities/institutions;
- b) To pool resources including but not limited to offering scholarship for higher studies;
- c) To promote exchange of students and faculty among the participating universities/institutions; and,
- d) To establish virtual centers of excellence.

It is expected to be attended by over 300 Vice Chancellors/Rectors/Presidents of universities/higher education institutions of the OIC member states. The Forum will provide a platform to the university leaders from the Islamic world for fostering collaboration, strengthening cooperation and encouraging dialogue among them and the institutions they represent.

### CO-ORGANIZERS



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