



Association of Egyptian-American Scholars

Founded in the United States and Canada in 1974

CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

**[A Report by the participants, Compiled during the Closing Session and
Edited by the Chair of the Organizing Committee, June 7, 2000]**

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"New Visions for Education and Technology"

***AEAS' 2000 Conference
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
June 2 - 4, 2000***

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:

The Association of Egyptian American Scholars (USA and Canada) held its North American Conference this year on Friday to Sunday June 2-4, 2000 in Toronto, Canada at Holiday Inn Select near Toronto Airport. All meetings and the banquet took place in the Roof Garden room (the whole of the 12th floor of the Hotel). Many praised the Conference venue, and felt that the cheerful room overlooking Toronto Airport and the greater City of Toronto contributed to the success of this Conference. A very large number of participants stated it loudly that this was the best AEAS Conference ever, in its organization, quality and quantity of papers and its deliberations.

The AEAS Toronto Conference was indeed, as expected, one of the best organized, and most successful annual meeting in the in the Association 26 years history, according to many attendees. Many people expressed their feeling that this was a very Special Meeting. We were most pleased with the Egyptian/Canadian/US Team spirit that is credited for this success. Indeed several members of the Organizing Team have given tremendous time and energy in organizing this event for the past six months. However the support and participation of the colleagues and presenters was the most important factor.

As you know, the aim of the AEAS is to strengthen the cultural, scientific, and educational ties between the Egyptian Scholars in North America and the Motherland, our beloved Egypt. To all contributors and participants, who are helping with this aim, and for providing assistance and vision to help with the challenges of the future, we express our thanks and gratitude.

Sixty-three attendees registered at the Conference which included 40 papers, most of which were presented at the Conference [**See the Actual Final Program below**].

These as well as the presentations during the Panel Session, represented state-of-the-art and innovations relating to New Visions for Education and Technology, applicable to Egypt's needs.

Attendance, in the Sessions, throughout the three days, was very good (about 50 to 60 people at any one time).

The Program theme this year was: *“New Visions for Education and Technology”* which is most timely with regard to Egypt’s needs in preparation for the new millennium and for the globalization of the world economies. The Conference, as reflected in the published Proceedings and full-length papers on CD, contains a strong participation by the Egyptian Scholars living in Canada, Egypt, the United States, U.K, Saudi-Arabia, etc.. The technical program includes five Sessions dealing with: *Advanced And Emerging Technologies, Education Models, Impact Of New Technologies On: Education, Human Development, Cultural, Legal And Socio-Economic Factors.*

We were indeed most impressed with the response from our colleagues to the invitation to meet in Canada, as a prelude for “Egypt’ 2000” bi-annual Conference to be held in Cairo in December 2000. The large number of contributed papers, presentations, Panel discussions made this meeting one of the busiest and most productive one. The papers, as usual with AEAS North American Conferences, were from Professionals for Professionals, and focused on realistic applications.

For the first time, in addition to the published Conference Proceedings (Abstracts), a CD was made available during the Conference, containing Full papers and Multi-media presentations. Most of the presentations were of very high quality and value. The full papers were also available in hard copies for use by Conference attendees during the Sessions.

Many passionate discussions took place during the General Assembly, the Technical meetings and the Panel Session on Saturday and the Closing Session on Sunday.

It was very clear that all participants have Egypt in their heart and they all have one common goal (which coincides very well with the goal of AEAS and beyond).

The single session format made for a good enthusiastic participation and interaction.

The first Opening Session was chaired by Dr. Hoda ElMaraghy (El-Gammal), Vice-President of AEAS. She was followed by Dr. Bad El-Din Ali (AEAS President). In both their welcoming introductory remarks, they reviewed briefly the aims and achievements of the Associations. Dr. ElMaraghy then introduced the Guest Speaker at the opening session, the Chargé D’Affaires of the Egyptian Embassy in Ottawa, H.E. Dr. Mohammed Zayed, himself a Scholar, gave the Opening address.

In his opening address, Dr. Zayed urged the participants and the Association to increase the membership in the Association, as there are many more Egyptians Scholars in Canada and in US. To increase the visibility of the Egyptian Canadian participation in particular, as well as to set a clear vision and Agenda for a national project that the AEAS can, as a group, contribute to. These suggestions were taken-up in the discussions during the General Assembly and Panel Sessions, and in some sense are reflected in the recommendations below.

In addition to the AEAS members, we were most honoured and pleased with the participation of other the Egyptian Officials (who are also Scholars in their own rights): the Cultural Councillor of the Egyptian Education and Cultural Centres in both Washington DC (USA) and Montreal (Canada), respectively: Dr Osama Zaki and Dr. Ahmed El-Sherbini. Both also Chaired Sessions and participated in the deliberations of the Conference. Furthermore, the Information Director of the Press Office (Egyptian Embassy in Ottawa, Canada), Mrs. Fatma Abdalla, attended the entire

event and presented posters and papyrus drawings, which later were distributed as prizes at the banquet to some randomly, selected winners (Tickets Draw).

We were also very pleased with the diligent participation throughout the Sessions of Mr. Moustapha Samy Sadek, the Al-Ahram Newspaper representative and Director of the Montreal, Canada Office. Mr. Sadek is a very respected personality in both Canada and Egypt, and plans to cover the Conference in Egypt's leading Newspaper.

Most of the above individuals have expressed an interest to actively participate and assist the AEAS with its next meeting, which is the AEAS bi-annual meeting to be held in Cairo December 29 – 31, 2000.

It was suggested that the AEAS Board would follow-up on many of the recommendations, hereby made to the Board, and perhaps to be discussed in future meetings of the Association.

The Banquet, attended by 70 people, was followed by one hour Folkloric Egyptian Dances performed by the Habeeba dance troupe of Toronto, Canada. It was a high performance artistic show, reminiscent of the Reda Dance Troupe in Egypt. The dance with the "Pharaonic Masks" was very intriguing and highly colourful. It was a great cultural and artistic performance.

One of the very impressive Conference highlights was the speech by Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Vice President of The World Bank. His topic was very appropriately entitled: "Education, Science, and Values: Producers and Consumers in New Knowledge Economy". It was a very inspiring speech, directed at mobilizing the Egyptian Scholars energies and talents to help our beloved Egypt, the Mother Land.

Dr. Ismail Serageldin speech addressed five themes:

- 1) The changing world and the new "knowledge economy", and the special position of Science and Technology within these changes.
- 2) Why we must become "learning nations", and what Egypt must do to become such a "learning nation".
- 3) Adoption of the Scientific method and the values of science, which are, to me, an essential task for the liberation of the Egyptian mind. Liberating intellectual inquiry and artistic imagination to create a new Egyptian renaissance.
- 4) The role of the intellectuals in inventing the future. This is linked to what the broader intelligentsia is doing to create the mirrors in which we see ourselves and the windows through which we see the world.
- 5) "I want to invite you to share with me the dream of what can be, if only we dare to dream."

He concluded with the following challenge: "These tasks are enormous. But the longest journey starts with a single step. So let us start. If not us, who? If not now, when? "

On request of many members of AEAS, and others, a copy of the speech of Dr. Ismail Serageldin, delivered at the Banquet on June 3, 2000, **can be made available, preferably as an e-mail attachment (MS Word format) for participants that request it.**

Dr. Ismail Serageldin also announced that he practices what he preaches and has decided to return to Egypt in the Fall (Autumn) of this year (2000) to have his business in the land of opportunities in High Technology.

Dr. Serageldin was presented by the President of AEAS, Dr. Badr Eldin Ali, with the Special AEAS "Scholar of the Year" Achievement Award. He later presented the special awards to the members of the Conference Organizing Committee, as well as others that assisted in the success of the Conference; and presented the winners for both the AEAS special three gifts and the six papyrus drawings, from the Egyptian Information Office in Ottawa.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Increase Awareness That Education Should Be A Strategic Target.
- 2) The AEAS Would Like To Continue To Assist Egypt In Adopting Scientific Methods In All Fields.
- 3) The Egyptian Scholars Would To Continue To Assist Egypt In Its Efforts To "Internalize" In All Fields, In Particular: In Innovation, And Industrial Production, To Face The Challenges Of The Market Economy And Globalization.
- 4) Innovation And Advanced Technology Are Pre-Requisites. The Egyptian Scholars Are Prepared, As Always, To Play An Active Role To Assist Egypt In Participating More Fully In The Technological Revolution.
- 5) E-Education (Education Using The Internet And Multi-Media) To Be Within Egypt For Both Pre- And Higher Education Levels As Well As In Collaboration With International Distance Learning Education Systems.
- 6) Introduce Interactive Distance Education, With The Assistance And Participation Of Enthusiastic Egyptian Scholars Living Abroad. Which Can Be Done From Anywhere To Anywhere (Regardless Of Distance), Using The Internet And Computer Communication Technology.
- 7) Review The Curriculum, On An Ongoing Basis, And Introduce The Accreditation (For Example The Canadian Engineering Accreditation System).
- 8) Introduce And/Or Expand The Concept Of Centers Of Excellence (In Order To Increase Impact In Certain Key Areas).
- 9) In Addition Liberal And Arts Education Should Be Encouraged (To Produce Renaissance Individuals).
- 10) Special Attention Should Be Given To The Computerized Library System, And Make It Available To Scholars And Students In Egypt. + Resources Centers...
- 11) We Encourage Egypt To Pursue Its New National Plan To Define The Needs, The Methods And The Different Actions To Create And Encourage This Vital Industry: Education And Training, Internet, E- Commerce, And Software Industry, etc.. From Currently US\$50M, Egypt Should Aim For Building A US\$12B Software Industry.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

[To Be Addresses And Followed-Up By The AEAS Board And Others]

- 12) Put An Action Plan In Place To Achieve These Goals (On-Going Follow-Up). AEAS Is Challenged To Produce A Strategic Plan Formulating Its Vision And Action Plan For The New Millennium, + Detailed Recommendations.
- 13) A Sub-Group From AEAS Should Begin A Focused Effort For Interaction With The Business Community In Egypt, To Further The Objectives Of AEAS.
- 14) Set-Up A Plan To Increase Interaction Between North American And Egyptian Universities.
- 15) A Matchmaker System Must Be Established To Match The Skills And Talents Of The Egyptian Scholars Living Abroad.
- 16) Set-Up A Database (Or Aggregation Of Existing Databases) To Further The Above Objectives.
- 17) AEAS To Increase Its Visibility And Set-Up A Web Page To Support These Aims. (It Is Obvious That Board Members And All Members Should Have Access To E-Mail).
- 18) A Copy Of The Conference Proceedings And CD Should Be Sent To All Egyptian Government Ministries, As Well As The Private Sector Organizations And Leading Egyptian Universities.
- 19) Consider Change In The Name Of The Association To Reflect The Strong Canadian Participation And Involvement.
- 20) As A Direct Result Of The Success Of This Conference, Hold An Annual Meeting In Canada (Or Every Couple Of Years), And Consider Continuing What Was Started Here, To Invite Egyptian Scholars, From Egypt, To Participate.
- 21) Publicize The AEAS, And Collaborate With Other Organizations, Particularly Student Organizations Such As ESANA (The Egyptian Students Association In USA & Canada).

**WEM/
7/6/2000**