

IS-2008, Al-Arish, Egypt

The 3rd International Conference IS-2008 was organized at Sinai University, Al Arish (Egypt) from 11-14th September, 2008. The conference was jointly organized by International Association of Professionals in Sugar and Integrated Technologies (IAPSIT) and Sinai University. The IS-2008 conference was well attended and represented by over 300 delegates came from 23 developed and developing countries. The theme of the IS-2008 conference was 'Meeting the Challenges of Sugar Crops and Integrated Industries in Developing Countries'. The conference was inaugurated by H.E. Amin Abaza, Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Egypt. The inaugural ceremony of IS-2008 was graced by Mr. Abdel Fadel, Governor of North Sinai, Dr. Peter Baron, Executive Director, International Sugar Organization, Mr. S.L. Jain, Director General, Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), Mr. Zhao Zhang, China Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Hassan Rateb, President Board of Trustees Sinai University, Dr. Yang –Rui Li, President of IAPSIT, Dr. S. Solomon, Secretary IAPSIT & IS-2008, Prof. M.I. Nasr, Coordinator IS-2008 and members of Executive Committee of IAPSIT. Dr Peter Baron, Executive Director of International Sugar Organization presented a paper on 'Socio-economic perspective of the sugar –ethanol business in developing countries' said "that sugar will remain, a highly political commodity, characterized by political interventions for better or worse, depending on where you stand. For us in the ISO the socio-economic role of sugar and ethanol in development is very high on our political agenda because the lion's share of our members is developing and least developed countries." In many cases, sugar and nowadays, ethanol, plays a tremendous role to give the rural population a reliable and sustainable income and work. He emphasized that there are many policy and economy related drivers shaping the socio-economic perspectives in developing countries and the most pertinent ones are consumption potential, diversification (ethanol, electricity cogeneration), sugar crops as feeds-tocks for ethanol, prices (international and domestic), self-sufficiency as a policy objective, trade patterns, trade flows and destination refining, sustainable production – an indispensable objective. Dr. Baron reiterated that technological and scientific advances and innovations have to be embraced to the fullest extent possible. There are still a lot of productivity and efficiency reserves which will be tapped over the coming years in field and factory. They will make sugar crops even more competitive as a food and energy supplier. He cited a few examples, viz., genetically modified, high yielding, more disease resistant beet and cane varieties. Tropical beets and winter beets, better transport infrastructure, more sophisticated logistics and last but not least state of the art technology in processing to reduce post harvest losses, to augment extraction rates and to develop alternative and complimentary uses like bio-degradable plastics. Dr.

S.L. Jain, of ISMA apprised the elite gathering about the Economic Importance of Sugar and Integrated Industry in Developing Countries. He pointed out that “sugar is one of the major agricultural commodities just after cereals and oils, which accounts for 10% of dietary calories worldwide. About 76% of sugar in the world is produced from the sugarcane while 24% sugar is produced from sugar beet and over 75% of cane sugar is produced in ten developing countries. Sugarcane is a major source of income to millions of farmers in the developing countries and therefore, the sugar industry plays an extremely important role in the economies of respective countries. Prof. Mahmoud I.Nasr, appreciated the efforts of IAPSIT Executive Committee and the management of Sinai University in holding IS-2008. The IS-2008 conference was arranged in six technical sessions and a special session on Premier Sugar Crops Research Institutes and Associations of the world was organized on 11th September,2009. The organizing committee of IS 2008 invited all delegates to a gala dinner on a cruise boat “Paharoah” on the Nile with belly dancer, folklore show and western music. The exquisite Egyptian cuisine made it a memorable dining experience for everybody. All participants enjoyed a magnificent view of Cairo city. During the cruise, following dinner, participants enjoyed a folklore show and belly dancing to the tune of Egyptian-Western music. The IS-2008 delegates were also taken to Hawamdia Sugar Unit, about 30 kilometers from Cairo. Dr. Hassan Rateb, Chairman Board of Trustees, Sinai University presented “Sinai University Peace Award” to Prof. Yang-Rui Li, Dr. S. Solomon and Prof. M.I. Nasr for their outstanding contribution in promoting peace, goodwill and mutual understanding among the people of developing countries. Dr. Yang-Rui Li, President of IAPSIT presented “Global Award for Excellence-2008” to Dr. S. Solomon, Dr. G.P. Rao and Dr. Q.Z. Tang for their great contribution in promotion of science & technology among developing countries.