

COLOMBO DECLARATION

On South-South Cooperation for Technology Transfer and Development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

WHILE EXPRESSING gratitude to the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the hosts of the International Conference on 'South-South Cooperation for Technology Transfer and Development for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's), jointly organised by the National Science Foundation and the National Science and Technology Commission of Sri Lanka and the Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (NAM S&T Centre) during 18-22 August 2008,

HAVING DELIBERATED on various issues related to knowledge, approaches and experiences related to the problems and prospects on the development and transfer of SME's,

THE SPECIFIC ISSUES encompassing:

- Implementation of Technology Transfer, Laws and Policies and Market Development
- Implementation of Technology Transfer, Partnership Development, IPR Issues and Quality Assurance
- Strengths and Barriers for Effective Technology Development and Transfer
- Technology Assimilation and Networking

THE PARTICIPANTS EXPRESSED unanimity that the Conference has been a resounding success in coming out with focused recommendations and actions as below, that would help NAM and other developing countries in formulating their plans for the strengthening of the existing SME's and equivalent structures as well as in the creation of new entities to promote the adoption of technologies developed within their countries by the concerned users and industries aimed at their economic growth;

- It is desirable that every country should establish a National Technology Transfer Centre (or an equivalent body) to act as a bridge between technology developers (transferors) and users/investors (transferees), maintain databases of technology offers and technology requests and provide necessary services to manage the process of technology transfer, including technical and managerial consultancy, IP services, assistance with obtaining credit, etc.
- The persons engaged in technology transfer, including Technology Transfer (TT) managers, developers and users should be trained in the necessary managerial techniques, as well as the best practices in the field of TT, based on the experience of successful examples from various countries.
- Countries should streamline their laws and regulations to facilitate all aspects of SME development, thereby bringing their regulations into compliance with SME friendly policies, and eliminating contradictions between such policies and actual regulations governing the availability of credit, customs, standards, taxation, etc.

- Persons who have participated in successfully transferring technologies in R&D institutions, universities, etc. should be given appropriate incentives (e.g. promotions).
- Countries should set up financial institutions (e.g. the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh) to assist poor communities in technology transfer.
- Governments should fund R&D organizations for improvement, modernization and refurbishment of infrastructure that enable them to help SMEs.
- Governments should initiate the development of Technology/Business Incubators, where not available. For capacity building the resources available with infoDev of World Bank could be utilized. IDISC.net portal could be linked with the proposed national technology transfer facility.
- The developing countries having SME's and those desirous of establishing SME's shall network among each other with expertise of UNESCAP-APCTT.
- A database on technology offers and requests, training institutions, R&D institutions, machinery, consultancies etc., shall be facilitated through the expertise available with the Department of Science and Technology of the Republic of South Africa, Belarus Republican Centre for Technology Transfer and the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) of Nigeria.
- A quarterly electronic newsletter providing information on the available technologies developed within the developing countries, the available experts and any technical requirements that may be met through interactions among the developing countries themselves shall be brought out by VIT University, Vellore, India with the facilitation of the NAM S&T Centre.
- Fellowship scheme of the NAM S&T Centre shall be made use of for training of personnel in technology development and transfer from one member country to the scientific institutions and industry in another member country of the Centre.
- Workshops and training courses in the areas related to the issues concerning technology transfer and SME's, as well as other areas, shall be considered for organisation by COMSATS in consultation with the NAM S&T Centre.

THUS DECLARED AND ADOPTED IN NEGOMBO, SRI LANKA ON THIS DAY, 21st AUGUST 2008.