



# ECOSF NEWSLETTER



## Secretary General of ECO Convenes a Meeting of Specialized Agencies at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran

ECO Secretary General H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akca convened in ECO Secretariat Tehran, a meeting of the Presidents of ECO's Specialized Agencies; viz., ECO Cultural Institute (Tehran- Iran), ECO Science Foundation (Islamabad- Pakistan) and the ECO Educational Institute based in Ankara- Turkey on February 4, 2018. Purpose of the meeting was to discuss various issues of the three specialized agencies of ECO in the context of reform agenda. The meeting chaired by the Secretary General, was attended by the heads of ECO Specialized Agencies; President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro, President ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI) Prof. Dr. Akif Kirecci and the President of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Mazaheri, along with Deputy Secretary General of ECO and other concerned staff of the CO Secretariat.



The meeting deliberated on various issues of the ECO Specialized Agencies with special reference to their management and budgetary matters. The President ECOSF was particularly requested by the Secretary General to share the experiences of establishment and management of the ECO Science Foundation, which in his words, has made good progress in a short span of time and with much less core funding. The findings of the meeting would be presented in the next meeting of the Council of Ministers (ECO COM) expected to be held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan during April 2018.

## Ferdowsi University of Mashhad in collaboration with MSRT Iran and ECOSF organized the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Green University in Mashhad, Iran

Ferdowsi University of Mashhad in partnership with Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT), Government of Iran, ECOSF and GreenMetric Indonesia, held its first International conference on the concept of "Green University" on 6-7 February 2018. The two-day conference attracted a number of experts and scientists on Sustainable Management and Green Campuses to share their experience and best practices in the field of sustainable development with special focus on sustainable campuses. Minister of MSRT of Iran Dr. Mansoor Gholami was the Chief Guest in the event.

The international conference highlighted various themes and concepts on sustainable campuses using GreenMetric system. This system assesses six key dimensions of environmental infrastructures, energy and climate change, wastewater management, water,



transport and education in the universities. The GreenMetric system was launched by Universitas Indonesia in 2010 in order to present a comprehensive overview and policies related to environmental issues and sustainable development in universities worldwide. The conference provided an opportunity to participants to present a comprehensive landscape of environmental conditions, policies and sustainable development in universities of different countries including those of the ECO member countries.



ECOSF facilitated the participation of representative of Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan for implementation of sustainable initiatives in the universities in Pakistan under the umbrella of HEC. ECOSF also provided a handsome grant to the Ferdowsi University for organizing the conference. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was one of the keynote speakers and spoke highlighting various initiatives undertaken by the Foundation to promote STI as a whole but specifically the science education with focus on sustainability and green concepts in the universities and campuses in the ECO member states, in line with SDGs. Prof. Dr. Soomro emphasized over the need to transform universities into green and sustainable campuses. It is crucial to stay competitive in a greener world and it is important to implement sustainability management into all economic sectors including universities and schools, he said. Prof. Soomro stressed that sustainability approach tends to increase operational efficiency, reduce waste and optimize the resources, which is help to improve business and process productivity. He also proposed establishment of an "Office of Sustainability" in universities to coordinate the many planning initiatives, projects, networking, and monitoring of the program's progress in achieving its goals.



Prof. Soomro further underscored that Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education coupled with Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) approach, is the key to achieve sustainability in all spheres of life. ECOSF strives to promote STEM education through IBSE approach in the ECO region. Our youth and young students are required to be trained with such skills that have the potential to address some of the most pressing challenges of sustainability in the water and energy areas, he said.

On the occasion of the international conference, MoU was signed between ECOSF and Ferdowsi University of Mashad on February 7, 2018 to specifically promote sustainability in university campuses and other educational institutions and exchange of best practices of sustainability initiatives across the ECO region. Under the MoU, Ferdowsi University will assist ECOSF in promoting the concepts of Green Campuses. The MoU was signed by President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro on behalf of the Foundation and the President Ferdowsi Univeristy of Mashad Prof. Muhammad Kafi on behalf of the University.



**PCSIR and ECOSF organized the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Frontiers of Advance Engineering Materials (FAEM-18) at Lahore- Pakistan**

Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) in collaboration with ECOSF and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) organized the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Frontiers of Advanced Engineering Materials (FAEM-18) at PCSIR Laboratories Complex in Lahore- Pakistan on February 19-20, 2018.

The overall objective of this conference was to review problems pertaining to materials in industrial sector, new challenges in research and development of high performance materials and to ascertain design issues for efficiency and profitability without compromising plant safety. The conference provided scientists, engineers and students an opportunity to actively engage in in-depth research discussions on advanced engineering materials, their production and applications. ECOSF was the main collaborator and sponsored participation of Materials Scientists and Engineers from ECO member countries viz., Iran and Kyrgyzstan in the conference.

Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Govt. of Pakistan and the Chairman of ECOSF Board of Trustees, H.E. Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain was the Chief Guest of the conference. The Federal Secretary to the Government of Pakistan for Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Ms. Yasmeen Masood and President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro were also present and spoke in the inauguration ceremony.



The Federal Minister in his opening speech said that developing the quality human resource will be important to change the future of our country. He underscored that advanced research in engineering materials is a need of the hour to respond to the various challenges in Pakistan. He congratulated PCSIR for consistently organizing the conference on materials and appreciated the efforts of ECOSF and its President Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro for their support in organizing this Conference.

The Secretary MoST Ms. Masood in her speech congratulated PCSIR and ECOSF as well as their leaders for making the conference possible. She emphasized on more engagement of PCSIR with industry for commercialization of research results, and assured of continued support of the MoST to researchers.

Dr. Shahzad Alam, Chairman PCSIR in his speech, welcomed the delegates and guests for their participation in the conference. Dr. Alam thanked the ECOSF and MoST for their partnership and collaboration in organization of this conference on an important subject. Dr. Alam also highlighted the significance of advanced materials and their applications for the advancement of society and improvement of human lives. He also shared the progress of PCSIR with particular reference to engagement with and facilitation to the Industry in commercialization/application of the technologies and processes so developed by the PCSIR.

President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor Soomro in his speech in the inauguration said that Engineering Materials are central for day-to-day life in modern society and used as basic building blocks in different industries. Prof. Soomro stressed that materials have contributed to numerous technological advancements in various fields as diverse as medicine and health, national security, information technology, aerospace, telecommunications and energy. He also underscored that



innovations in advanced materials science and engineering can lead to improved materials and solutions to technological, societal, and environmental problems.

Read more: <http://eco4science.org/FAEM-18>

**5<sup>th</sup> International Workshop for Capacity Building in Nematology jointly organized by ECOSF and NNRC, University of Karachi- Pakistan**

The 5<sup>th</sup> International Workshop for Capacity Building in Nematology was jointly organized by the National Nematological Research Centre (NNRC) of the University of Karachi, Karachi, Pakistan Society of Nematologists and ECOSF from 12-22 February 2018 at the University of Karachi- Pakistan. The workshop was supported by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) and Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF).

A total of 42 participants which included resource persons and trainees from six ECO countries; i.e. Afghanistan (02), Azerbaijan (01), Iran (03), Kyrgyzstan (02), Pakistan (32- the host) and Tajikistan (02) attended the workshop. The senior scientists presented country reports in one day seminar with reference to status of Nematology and its Development in their countries.

The workshop was opened by the Vice Chancellor of University of Karachi (UoK), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ajmal Khan and the Member of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan Prof. Dr. G. Raza Bhatti. In his opening speech, Professor Khan welcomed the distinguished national and international guests in the University and thanked ECOSF for partnering with the University to organize the workshop. He pledged his support for the workshop and NNRC for future ventures. He briefly gave introduction of UoK to the participants mentioning its establishment and various programmes/departments. He also shared that some institutes of the University such as Institute of Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) and Institute of Business Administration (IBA) are the world class institutes. He admired the activities of ECOSF for promotion of Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) in the region and hoped that ECOSF would continue supporting the University and he would personally look in to the options how the University can benefit more from the Foundation.



Read More: <http://eco4science.org/5th-International-Workshop-Nematology>

**ECOSF in collaboration with PSC, PSF and ICF organized the Two-day “Science Fun Mela” during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pakistan Mother Languages Literature Festival at Lok Virsa Museum in Islamabad- Pakistan**

Two-day “Science Fun Mela” (Science Fun Fair) was organized by the ECOSF in collaboration with Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF), Pakistan Science Club (PSC), Indus Cultural Forum (ICF) and Lok Virsa Museum (Heritage Museum) of Pakistan at the Museum in Islamabad on 17-18 February 2017. The event was a part of 3rd Pakistan Mother Languages Literature Festival (MLLF). The Festival aimed at promotion of mother languages spoken in Pakistan and to bring together under one roof, the multiple colours and diversity of literature in indigenous languages. The idea of organizing Science Fun Mela (festival) along the

MLLF was to inculcate among children the urge for learning science around us and in the universe; so as to promote Science Culture in the country using mother languages for better understanding of the science concepts and processes.

President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated as one of the panelists among other distinguished speakers during the inaugural of the Festival. Prof. Soomro stressed that science promotion must be part of cultural festivals so as to promote a science culture. Science literature, poetry on science concepts and storytelling in mother languages could play an important role in stimulating the interest of general public and young children to increase their scientific literacy.



Mr. Abdul Rauf, CEO of PSC conducted a number of fun scientific activities by actively engaging children and parents in various interactive and hands-on activities which focused on developing the fundamental scientific concepts. Visitors mainly children and their parents were actively engaged to raise their curiosity and provided them with an amazing opportunity for hands-on learning experience and insight to explore the logic behind scientific phenomena in everyday life.

During the event, robot making competition was also held, wherein children enthusiastically participated along with their parents and prepared robots with low cost materials such as plastic cup, straws, electric motor and batteries. This competition of robot making showed kids the concept of vibration that can be translated in to rotatory motion. A planetarium show was also set up in the event- thanks to PSF. Children as well as teachers and parents experienced the demonstration of planets, stars, galaxy through imagery, projector and video in the planetarium show.



**Presidents of ECOSF and ECOEI visit ECI in Tehran**

President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro and President ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI) Prof. Dr. Akif Kirecci paid a visit to ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) in Tehran- Iran on February 4, 2018. President of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) Dr. Mohammad Mehdi



Mazaheri warmly welcomed the delegates to the Institute and briefed them on various ongoing programmes of the institutes. The heads of of three ECO's specialized agencies pledged to work together particularly by organizing programmes for the youth of the ECO member countries and pursue common goals and promotion of science & technology, education and culture in the ECO region.

### ECOSF Delegation Holds a Follow up Meeting with MSRT of Iran

President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro along with Executive Director-Elect Prof. Syed Komail Tayebi held a follow-up meeting with the Focal Person for ECOSF in the Ministry of Science, Research & Technology (MSRT) of Iran, Dr. Attaullah Koochian Director of the Center of International Scientific Cooperation and Mr. Ali Gannadi in Tehran on February 5, 2018.

Purpose of the meeting was to review the progress and updates on various matters, particularly budgetary contribution and transfer of funds from Government of I.R. Iran to ECOSF in Pakistan and the holding of next meeting of ECOSF Board of Trustees (BoT) scheduled to take place in Iran in April-May 2018 as well as the proposed scholarship grants to ECOSF by the MSRT. Prof. Soomro appreciated the efforts taken by the MSRT and the Government of Iran for their support to ECOSF in various matters. MSRT officials discussed different options of funds transfer to ECOSF account in Pakistan. They then assured to do something so as to solve the problem in funds transfer. Prof. Soomro assured his full support in scaling up the of ECOSF in Iran and with other ECO member countries in the areas of Science, Technology and Innovation and Science education by building the capacity of teacher trainers and school teachers.

### ECOSF Participated in the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Social Sciences and Information-Communication Technologies (ICSIST-2018) organized by SAU Tandojam- Pakistan

Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam- Pakistan in collaboration with Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan organized the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Social Sciences and Information-Communication Technologies (ICSIST-2018) at the university on February 20-21, 2018. The International Conference brought together leading academicians and researchers to review the current and emerging issues in Social Sciences and Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) that affect the industries, environment and consumers through presentation and discussion in plenary, oral and poster sessions as well as informal gatherings. The conference was opened by the Sindh Minister for Health Dr. Sikandar Ali Mandhro on 20th Feb; while, Dr. Sikandar Ali Shoro, Special Assistant to Chief Minister, Sindh for Information Technology was the Chief Guest in the Closing on 21st Feb. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro was also invited as Guest of Honour in the Closing ceremony.



The Vice Chancellor SAU, Prof. Dr. Mujeeb uddin Memon and the President ECOSF, Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro also spoke in the closing. Dr. Soomro in his speech congratulated the Vice Chancellor Prof. Memon and his team for their efforts in organizing the International Conference on Social Sciences and Information-Communication Technologies 2018 and making it a successful event. He admired the progress made by the SAU and its contributions during the last three years especially towards the SDGs by engaging faculty and students in farmers' advisory services in the province of Sindh. He also appreciated in the university leadership for establishing effective international linkages and collaborations with other countries, such as China and Germany. Prof. Soomro highlighted the importance of ICTs and potential benefits of these technologies in present and in future in the real world with particular reference to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics in farm technologies and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Read More: <http://eco4science.org/ICSIST-2018>

### President ECOSF meets the President of University of Isfahan

While in Mashhad Iran during the 1st International Conference on Green University, President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro along with Executive Director (elect) of ECOSF Professor Seyed Komail Tayebi held a meeting with President of University of Isfahan Prof. Dr. Hoshang Talebi on February 6, 2018. The discussion centered on hosting the 4th meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) of ECOSF on behalf of Government of Iran the possibility of having an ECOSF coordinating/liaison unit

and a Resource Center for IBSE at the University of Isfahan for promotion of various scientific activities of the Foundation in I.R. Iran. Prof. Talebi was positive, and it was mutually agreed that he will meet the Additional Minister of MSRT Dr. Salar Amoli to decide the dates and modalities for hosting the BoT meeting around April-May 2018.

**ECOSF delegation visits Isfahan Mathematics House and meets its Team Leader for extending this concept to other ECO member states in Isfahan, Iran**

The Delegation of ECOSF comprising its President Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and the Executive Director Professor Seyed Komail Tayebi visited Isfahan Mathematics House (IMH) and held a meeting with Dr. Ali Rejali the Team Leader of IMH on February 8, 2018 in Isfahan, Iran. The visiting ECOSF team was briefed in detail the functioning of the IMH. Prof. Soomro thanked IMH for sending the two experts to Lahore Science Fair in Lahore-Pakistan in January 2018, and appreciated the leadership for their contribution towards development of alternative teaching methods and non-conventional education of mathematics for encouraging young students to foster critical thinking as a better alternate to rote learning. He stressed that the Mathematics House is a unique concept that can provide effective tools for not only students and teachers for promoting greater understanding of the subject, but also for the general public for Maths literacy and logical thinking. Feedback on participation of two IMH expert ladies in the Lahore Science Mela 2018 (Pakistan) was also discussed. ECOSF had sponsored participation of two mathematicians from IMH in the Lahore Science Mela held on January 27-28, 2018.



Dr. Rejali appreciated the support extended to experts of IMH for their participation the Lahore event. Dr. Soomro further discussed with him the way forward to extend this unique concept for replication and establishment of similar Maths houses in other ECO member states; to which, Dr. Rejali happily agreed. It was also agreed to sign MoU between the two institutions for promotion of the concept in the ECO Region. During the visit, delegates were shown around the IMH and Prof. Soomro had an opportunity to interact with young students and mathematicians.

The IMH engages children from preschool to high schools to advance mathematical sciences and stimulate the interest amongst the students through non formal hands on training. The Isfahan Mathematics House has also developed numerous activities, tools and job skill development for the visually impaired persons including music, massage expertise and computer programmes, etc. It is pertinent to mention that while the IMH team was in Lahore, ECOSF facilitated the interaction between the IMH and School of Education at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in Pakistan for cooperation between the two organizations. It is expected that this initial interaction of experts from IMH facilitated by ECOSF will lead to a stronger cooperation in the future.

**A look into the IBSE Implementation at the Schools and Community Colleges of Sukkur IBA University, Pakistan**

A visit to Schools and Colleges under Sukkur IBA University (SIBAU) was undertaken by Mr. Ghulam Abbas the ECOSF Coordinator of IBSE programme from 19-21 February 2018. Mr. Abbas was accompanied and technically supported by Mr. Zahid Hussain Mirani, Lecturer at Community College of SIBAU at Dadu city of Sindh province Pakistan. Mr. Mirani had been previously

trained by the trainers of *La main a la pate* (LAMAP) Foundation of France in September 2016. Purpose of the visit was to ascertain and technically monitor the implementation of IBSE methodology in Schools and Colleges managed by SIBAU and to undertake a pre-scoping for the forthcoming visit of LAMAP France expert to Pakistan to witness the progress of IBSE implementation in the country. LAMAP is a world leader organization in teaching IBSE approach and a strong collaborator of ECOSF for IBSE.

Three schools/colleges managed by SIBAU i.e., Sukkur Public School, Community College Khairpur and Community College Naushehro Feroze were visited to observe IBSE implementation. Mix of four classes of primary and secondary level were observed in each school/college. A questionnaire was also developed to get the feedback from the teachers.

### Class Activities



Although, only limited number of classes were visited, based on the field visit and the feedback from the teachers, it was found that the majority of the teachers were aware about the usefulness of IBSE and despite the limited training on IBSE, they were more or less practicing IBSE methodology. Overall performance of the schools and colleges with reference to IBSE was satisfactory but there seemed a lot room for improvement; which can be achieved through dedicated team of quality assurance/monitoring. . However, it implied that a proper and full length training and capacity building is a must and that there is no short cut to success!

### **Thar Science Festival supported by ECOSF**

Thar Science Festival (TSF) was organized by the Thar Education Alliance in collaboration with Government of Sindh, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and various local NGOs. It was a 2-day activity of science, comprising of engaging events for people of all ages. TSF provided an opportunity to the students in particular and public in general to interact with the Tharparkar region's robust Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) network.

The Thar Science Festival strives to strengthen the communication between the region's science, cultural, and educational institutions as well as the communities they serve. It aims to work with thousands of STEM professionals and activity providers from over organizations throughout the Pakistan.



Science enthusiasts of all ages had the opportunity to look to the stars, explore working farms, build real robots, and get a little closer to nature. Festival attendees explored the science behind what makes us happy, learned about the health of our river from the fish that call it home, discovered how nature inspires modern technology, and so much more! Over 14,000 people embraced their curiosity and learned something new, proving that Discovery is in our DNA, said the main organizer Mr. Partab of



Thar Science Festival. It is pertinent to mention that Thar is the biggest desert area of Pakistan and people are mainly marginalised and such festivals are quite an attraction for the people at large. Supported by the Pakistan Alliance for Maths and Science (PAMS), of which ECOSF and its President Professor Soomro are the members, the Thar Science Festival is creating great awareness in the rural desert areas of Pakistan; which has triggered interest among other regions and communities as well.

Read More: <http://eco4science.org/Thar-Science-Festival>

### The Belt and Road Teenager Science Summer Camp

“The Belt and Road Teenager Science Summer Camp” is being hosted by China Association for Science & Technology (CAST), organized by Children & Youth Science Center (CYSC) of CAST, while supported by ECOSF alongside the 33rd China Adolescents Science and Technology Innovation Contest (CASTIC) from 14-20 August 2018 in Chongqing, China. It is pertinent to mention that CYSC is one of the Strategic Partners of ECOSF and this contest will be supported by ECOSF under its MoU with CYSC for promotion of science education and communication in the ECO Region under Belt and Road program of China. The Camp is aimed to strengthen communication and cooperation between China and countries along the belt and road and also inspire innovation in young generation in this region.

**ECOSF invite nominations of teams from each Member State to attend the subject camp and workshop. Each participating team should comprise five junior high-school science students (aged 13-15) and two teachers at most.**

The host organizations in China will provide local hospitality which includes hotel accommodation, meals, airport pick & drop (on given dates only) and local transportation. The cost of air travel of the participating team has to be borne by the participating team. It may be noted that the accompanying teachers have to take due responsibility in leading and taking care of participating students; ECOSF takes no responsibility in anyway except for facilitation for participation. The nominations of team may be forwarded to ECOSF on the registration forms (available at the link below) for both, students and teachers separately, **latest by 15 May 2018. The participation of team members in the workshop is subject to acceptance by the camp organizers, thus it will be much appreciated if only the “relevant” participants be nominated.**

Read More: <http://eco4science.org/The-Belt-and-Road-Teenager-Science-Summer-Camp>

**33<sup>rd</sup> China Adolescents Science and Technology Innovation Contest (CASTIC)**

“33<sup>rd</sup> China Adolescents Science and Technology Innovation Contest (CASTIC)” is jointly being organized by China Association for Science & Technology (CAST), Children & Youth Science Center (CYSC) of CAST, Ministry of Education along with a number of scientific organizations of P.R. of China such as Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Environmental Protection, National Sports Administration, National Natural Science Foundation, Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League, All-China Women’s Federation, State Intellectual Property Office and Chongqing Municipal Peoples Government of China while supported by InterAcademy Partnership on Science Education Program (IAP SEP) and ECOSF from 14-20 August 2018 in Chongqing, China. CYSC is one of the Strategic Partners of ECOSF and this contest will be supported by ECOSF under its MoU with CYSC for promotion of science education and communication in the ECO Region under “Belt and Road” initiative of China.

CASTIC is designed and organized for science-loving students aging from 12 to 20 years. CASTIC is one of the most prestigious and biggest science contests for young scientists around the World in China with history of over 30 years. This contest aims to engage young scientists and students with scientific activities and strengthening shared values and traditions for building regional integration.

Read More: <http://eco4science.org/33rd-CASTIC>

**Updates and Outcomes of Presidency of Kazakhstan at the United Nations Security Council**

January 31, 2018, marked the end of Kazakhstan’s month-long presidency at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Kazakhstan’s presidency in the world’s most important political body for the month of January was a culmination of its non permanent UNSC membership and a significant milestone in its strategy of building a positive momentum for global peace and security, as well as its international reputation. At present, Kazakhstan is known as a country that is at the forefront of the non-proliferation debate and hailed as an “honest broker” involved in efforts to resolve some of the most pressing challenges facing the world from Iran’s nuclear program to the civil war in Syria. However, the significance of the presidency is not limited to symbolism as it has also been a tool for Kazakhstan to promote national and regional priorities using its mandate for calling meetings and setting the agenda of the powerful council, whose decisions are mandatory for all the U.N. member states. Accordingly, Kazakhstan being the first ever country in Central Asia to assume this position prioritized the situation in and around Afghanistan that is of great concern to regional security, and issues related to non-proliferation. Overall, during the course of the month, Kazakhstan held over 40 events in the form of sessions, meetings, and consultations, which resulted in four UNSC resolutions, two presidential statements, and 12 press statements.

The first event of Kazakhstan’s presidency was held on January 2, 2018, in which Kairat Umarov, the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan, outlined the UNSC work program for January. This program was based on President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev’s policy address to the UNSC called “Kazakhstan’s Conceptual Vision of Strengthening Global Partnership for a Secure, Just and Prosperous World”. This document points out the following seven priority areas: moving towards a world free of nuclear weapons; creating conditions to prevent the threat of a global war and settle local conflicts; promoting peace, security and development in Central Asia, including Afghanistan; facilitating the formation of a global antiterrorist coalition (network) under the UN auspices; assisting the peaceful development of Africa; contributing to the UN sustainable development goals; and adapting the UN system to the needs and realities of the 21st century.

Overall, Kazakhstan being at the forefront of multilateral diplomacy and setting the agenda of the most influential global body has gained a notable recognition and status for itself, while also managing to attract attention to its priority issues from some of the world’s major powers. Therefore, its presidency at the UNSC has allowed Astana to further strengthen its international standing of the responsible partner in the issues of regional and international security.

[Courtesy- *ERI Bulletin, Astana- Kazakhstan*].

**Upcoming Events posted on ECOSF website and Facebook page****Nominations for 2018 Yidan Prize**

Founded in 2016, Yidan Prize is an international prize that gives recognition to individuals whose work makes profound contributions to education research and development, with the ultimate aim of creating a better world through education.

Read More: <http://eco4science.org/Yidan-Prize>

**NAM S&T CENTRE – DST (SOUTH AFRICA) TRAINING FELLOWSHIP ON MINERALS PROCESSING & BENEFICIATION: CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR 2018**

The Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (NAM S&T Centre) is pleased to invite applications from suitable candidates for the Joint NAM S&T Centre – DST (South Africa) Training Fellowship on Minerals Processing & Beneficiation for the year 2018.

This Fellowship scheme was initiated in the year 2015 with an aim to providing opportunity to the scientists and technologists from the member countries of the NAM S&T Centre for affiliation with MINTEK, South Africa for a period of three months to address the skills gap in the minerals beneficiation value chain and to get exposed to minerals processing technologies as well as undergo in-service training attached to the existing MINTEK programmes. This training programme will provide direct and indirect benefits to the Fellows from the member countries of the NAM S&T Centre and the host country, South Africa, through creation of networks and exposure to new developments in mineral processing and beneficiation.

Read More: <http://eco4science.org/MINERALS-PROCESSING-BENEFICIATION-2>

**The 20<sup>th</sup> National and 8th International Congress on Biology (August 22-24, 2018 at University of Maragheh, Iran)**

The 20<sup>th</sup> National and 8th International Congress on Biology scheduled on August 22-24, 2018 at University of Maragheh with the joint efforts of Iranian Biology Society and University of Maragheh. The congress aims at bringing together scientists, researchers and students to exchange and share their experiences and research results about biological sciences and discuss practical encountered challenges and their solutions. ECOSF supports the endeavour.

Read More: <http://eco4science.org/International-Congress-on-Biology>