

The 2005 International Research Conference on Innovations in Information Technology (IIT'05)

Emirates Towers Hotel, Dubai, UAE

September 26-28, 2005

<http://www.it-innovations.ae>

Press Release

INNOVATIONS 2005 OFF TO A GREAT START

September 26, Dubai - The second annual International Research Conference on Innovations in IT (Innovations 05) was off to a great start with an exciting opening ceremony and a serious panel debate on the future of knowledge production in the Middle-East. Organized by The UAE University in conjunction with Dubai eGovernment, the conference was officially opened by Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al-Nahayan, Minister of Education and Chancellor of the UAE University. "Information technology is vital to a knowledge economy, and the production of information technology is the cornerstone of many of the world's major developed countries." Sheikh Nahayan added, "it is appropriate that the theme of this year's conference is focused on producing information technology and I hope that the region will invest heavily in this endeavor."

The conference participants include: Mr. Mark De Simone, Vice President, Middle East and Africa (MEA), Cisco Systems Inc., Dr. Krishna Nathan, Vice President & Director of the IBM Zurich Research Laboratory, Dr. Vijay Chandru, Chairman & CEO, Strand Life Sciences, Dr. Jurgen Knorr, CEO of Dubai Silicon Oasis, as well as over 60 scientists from around the world. Mr. Mark De Simone and Dr. Vijay Chandru will present keynote addresses.

Also attending was Dr. Hadeef Al-Dhaheri, Vice Chancellor of UAE University, who thanked the keynote speakers. "This conference is unique in that it brings together academic researchers, industry professionals, researchers in major research laboratories and government IT leaders under one roof to discuss strategies to transform this region into a major producer of knowledge," said Dr. Al-Dhaheri.

"It is an honor for Cisco to keynote this important event this year, said Ghazi Atallah, Cisco Vice President. IIT'05 is considered a major regional conference and is making its mark internationally as evidenced by the number of prominent international scientific journals which are covering the conference," he added.

An important part of today's program was a panel session entitled, "Producing Information Technology - Can the Middle-East do it?" The panelists included:

Moderator: Mr. Gilbert Lacroix, VP Computer Associates
Dr. Yergen Knorr, CEO Dubai Silicon Oasis
Mr. Mark DeSimone: VP Cisco EMEA

Dr. Krishna Nathan: IBM VP and Director of Zurich Research Lab
Dr. Vijay Chandru, Chairman & CEO, Strand Life
Mr Chris Moyer, Fellow, EDS

The panel raised the principal issues that are important to address for IT production. The issues raised included:

What are the barriers to making IT production a reality in the region?
What are the roles that different regional countries can play?
What is the role of Incubators and spin-off companies - what is required to make this happen?
How can academe contribute to this effort?
What are the government responsibilities and why has government in the region in general not stepped up to these responsibilities yet?
What is the role of the IT-producing industry and what do we need to do to get them on board.
What is the role of major IT regional resellers?
How do we establish synergy between academe, industry and government and who acts as the catalyst for this synergy?
What is the role of Research & Development and what do we need to do in this regard to be a player in it (PhD programs, government research labs, etc...)

The panel recommendations is being compiled by the scientists that are participating in the program and will be disseminated upon the conclusion of the conference.

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