

## ISOSS Conference in Cairo Reinforces Statistics for Development and Good Governance

The 10<sup>th</sup> Islamic Countries Conference on Statistical Sciences (ICCS-X) was successfully held at the American University in Cairo (AUC), New Cairo, Egypt, with over 300 participants from all over the world. The biennial Conference was jointly organized by the Islamic Countries Society of Statistical Sciences (ISOSS), Egyptian Cabinet Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC) and AUC. The Conference was financially sponsored by the Islamic Development Bank (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia), the Egyptian Ministries of Tourism and Investments, IDSC and AUC. The Conference was dedicated to the late Professor Mir Maswood Ali, a prominent Statistician of Bangladeshi origin and key founder of the Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences, University of Western Ontario, Canada.



*Standing (from left): Kaye Bashford (Australia), Sharif A. Abdelhalim (IDB, Saudi Arabia), Magued Oslam (Chair, LOC, Egypt), Jef Teugels (ISI President, Belgium), Zeinab Amin (Co-Chair, LOC, Egypt), Mohammad Hanif Mian (ISOSS Vice-President, Pakistan), Edward Wegman (USA), Jim Berger (USA).*  
*Sitting (from left): Shahjahan Khan (ISOSS President, Australia), Wafik Younan (Treasurer, LOC, Egypt), Ali S Hadi (ISOSS President-Elect, USA/Egypt).*

In the opening session, Dr. Lisa Anderson, Provost of AUC, spoke about the importance and diverse applications of statistics from the ancient need of the states to the modern day public affairs. The ISOSS President, Dr. Shahjahan Khan of the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, emphasized the essence of engagements between the statisticians from the developed countries with those in the developing countries, especially with those of the IOC member states for improving the quality of government statistics and statistical research as well as enhancing its state of the art applications. Dr. Magued Osman, Chair of the Local Organizing Committee and Head of IDSC, spoke about the role of statistics for development and good governance. Dr. Ali S. Hadi, Vice-Provost of AUC, current Chief Editor of International Statistical Review, Chair of the Scientific and Program Committee, welcomed the participants while also covering different scientific and cultural activities of the Conference.



*Sitting (from left): Edward Wegman (USA), Jef Teugels (ISI President, Belgium), Mohammad Hanif Mian (ISOSS VicePresident, Pakistan), Jim Berger (USA), Shahjahan Khan (ISOSS President, Australia).*  
*Standing (from left): Sharif A. Abdelhalim (IDB, Saudi Arabia), Rasheed AlSuwaidi (DG, NBS, UAE), Rashid Salaria (Pakistan), Magued Osman (Chair, LOC, Egypt), Zeinab Amin (Co-Chair, LOC, Egypt), Ali Hadi (ISOSS President-Elect, Egypt/USA), Motiur Rahman (Bangladesh), Wafik Younan (Treasurer, LOC, Egypt), and Ishaq Bhatti (Australia).*

The highlights of the Conference included the participation of four keynote speakers. First, Dr. Jef L. Teugels, President of the International Statistical Institute (ISI), presented a keynote address on the extreme value distributions with applications. He analyzed data of natural calamities/disasters with extremes coming from the 1970 cyclone in Bangladesh and Hurricane Katrina in southern USA. Dr. Jim Berger covered the Bayesian adjustments of multiplicity in the testing regime of huge number of tests coming from multi-disciplinary scientific studies. Dr. Edward Wegman, who testified in the US Congress twice on the scientific aspects of climate change issues, discussed the rapid changes in the data science, and took the audience to the outer universe of huge datasets and the associated challenges to analyze them for scientific applications. Dr. Kaye Bashford, former President of the Statistical Society of Australia Inc., presented her keynote address on some applications of multivariate data analysis for determining the best quality of wheat production. The data presented in the talk came from an international team of experts working on the project around the world.



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The theme of the Conference was Statistics for Development and Good Governance. The following series of Panel Discussions related to this theme were presented. Panel I: Public Opinion Polling & Good Governance (Speaker: Magued Osman, Moderator: Dina El Khawaja, and Discussants: Jennifer Bremer and Hafez Al Mirazi), Panel II: Measuring the Unmeasurable (Speaker: Anis Yusoff, Moderator: Mostafa Kamel El Sayed, and Discussants: Nadia Makary, Ghada Moussa and Andrew Stone), and Panel III: Indicators & Politics, The Ibrahim Index for African Governance (Speaker: Ali S. Hadi, Moderator: Lisa Anderson, and Discussants: Lisa Anderson, Stephen Everhart and Nabil Fahmy).



*ICCS-X participants in a scientific session*

Another salient feature of the Conference was the presentation of invited sessions on topics such as statistics education, demography and aging, small area sampling, medical meta-analysis, statistical inference, astrostatistics, directional data analysis, etc. These sessions attracted leading scholars and researchers of these areas which benefited the participants enormously. Young and new researchers found the sessions stimulating for their future research. More details on the Conference Program and other activities of ISOSS can be found on the website: <http://www.isooss.com.pk/>.

The Nile Cruise Gala Dinner was held on a luxurious boat and the performance by the young Egyptian men was outstanding. Some participants of the Conference and the accompanying family members also participated in the interesting dance and performances. The trip to the pyramids in Giza was a once in a lifetime experience for many participants.



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Relating to the history of the invention of paper from the papyrus and the collection of essence from the lotus were popular items of purchase. Many went to the Egyptian Museum to see the mummies of the Pharaohs, including Ramses II, many consider to be the Pharaoh of Moses. The rich and colorful history of the ancient Egypt includes the first ever census conducted by Moses to count the men of Egypt at the time.



*Opening session of ICCS-X (left to right): Jef Teugels (ISI President), Shahjahan Khan (ISOSS President, Australia), Lisa Anderson (Provost of AUC), Magued Osman (Chair, LOC, Egypt), and Ali S. Hadi (ISOSS President-Elect, USA/Egypt).*

The business session of the Conference was held on the evening of 21 December at the Marry Cross Hall of AUC. The President of ISOSS chaired the session and reported the main activities and achievements of ISOSS during the last two years following the Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in December 2007. The participants noted that in recent years ISOSS has become more visible in the international community of professionals and various statistical bodies along with receiving global recognition. The session re-elected Dr. Shahjahan Khan as President of ISOSS for 2009-2011, and elected Dr. Ali S. Hadi as President-Elect for 2009-2011. The session endorsed the call of Dr. Munir Ahmed, founding President of ISOSS, for donations of funds to the ongoing ISOSS House Construction Project in Lahore, Pakistan. A number of participants committed to contribute US\$1,000 and US\$500 during the session.

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