

AARINENA 12th General Conference, Kuwait, 16-17 November 2011

The AARINENA 12th General Conference (GC) was held in Kuwait City, Kuwait, during the period 16-17 November 2011 and hosted by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), Kuwait city-Kuwait. The Conference was attended by participants representing AARINENA NARS members (Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and Yemen); International and regional Organizations including (ACSAD, ICARDA,

ICBA, IFPRI, GFAR, FAO, and FORAGRO); members NGOs and farmers representatives. The opening session was addressed by Dr. Ahmed Al-Bakri, the President of AARINENA. The deliberations were conducted in five technical sessions that dealt with AARINENA activities, Global and Inter-Regional Collaboration, Financial Statement, Constitution Amendments and Election.

At the AARINENA Activities Session, the Executive Secretary of AARINENA, Dr. Hamdan presented



Participants of the AARINENA 12th General Conference and International Conference on Adaptation to Climate Change and Food Security in WANA, Kuwait, 13-17 November 2011.

AARINENA progress report for the period 2008-2011 which highlighted activities implemented based on the plan approved by the 11th General Conference held in Damascus, Syria in October, 2008.

At the Global and Inter-Regional Collaboration Session, a presentation on the roadmap for the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) was made by Dr. Mark Holderness, GFAR Executive Secretary, who emphasized that the GCARD process is radically reshaping agricultural innovation and its significance in meeting key Millennium Development Goals. Dr. Mohammed Zehni presented a Draft Strategy on the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for the Near East and North Africa. He pointed out that the Coordinating Board (CB) of the Near East and North Africa Plant Genetic Resources Network (NENA-PGRN) has at its first meeting entrusted the development of the strategy to a small team, with him being the facilitator of the team's work. The draft strategy is made of four parts, namely: 1) Background, Justification and Assessment, 2) Strategy for the Future, 3) A Framework for Action and 4) Towards a Regional Information System. Dr. Zehni emphasized the need for the door to be left wide open for the further improvement of the Strategy through consultations with and inputs from all interested parties especially the countries of the Region.

Dr. Mahmoud Solh, Director General of ICARDA, addressed the CGIAR Reforms and Research Programs: Implications for WANA. He mentioned that the main goals of the CGIAR change process are to have a focused system with a clear vision and strategic direction and values dynamic partnerships, as well as a financially strengthened and cost effective CGIAR. Mrs. Taraneh Ebrahimi, AARINENA-RAIS Secretary and Web Manager, presented the ICM status report in WANA. Dr. Jawad Al-Bakri, GIS-RS Expert from the University of Jordan presented a draft concept proposal on implementing Agro-ICT packages for integrated water and land management in the WANA region aims to meet the needs of resource poor smallholder farmers and producers in better managing their water along with land resources. Dr. Derek Russel, a consultant for the European Forum for Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD), addressed major achievements of the EFARD, Maps of ARD networks in

Europe.

At the Financial Statement Session, the Executive Secretary presented AARINENA financial and membership status up to the end of October 2011. A proposal was made by the AARINENA President to increase the membership fees to cover the activities of the AARINENA and to contract a full-time Executive Secretary. The participants discussed and adopted the increase of the membership fees starting 2013. The increase will be as follows: a) Full membership fees from US\$ 3000 to US\$ 5000; b) Associate membership fees from 2000 to 3000 US\$. The GC welcomed the idea of having new members from universities that have faculties and institutions involved in agricultural research.

At the AARINENA Constitution Amendments Session, the Executive Secretary presented suggestions to make amendments to articles VIII, IX and XI of the constitution. Amendments in Articles VIII and IX were mainly related to shorten the period of presidency to become one time for three years without re-election in the next three years, with president and vice-president being elected from two different sub-regions.

At AARINENA Election Session, the full membership representatives elected the new President of AARINENA and Executive Committee Members for the coming three years (2011-2014) as follows:

- Dr. Faisal Awawdeh (Jordan), AARINENA President
- Dr. Eltahir Siddig Ali (Sudan), Vice President and Representative of the Nile Valley and Red Sea Sub-region
- Dr. Nasser Al-Khalifah (Saudi Arabia), Member Representative of the Arabian Peninsula Sub-region
- Dr. Habib Amamou (Tunisia), Member Representative of the Maghreb Sub-region
- Dr. Mohamed Abu-Eid (Palestine), Member Representative of the Mashreq Sub-region
- Dr. Mojtaba Rajab Baigi (Iran), Member Representative of West Asia Sub-region
- Dr. Mahmoud Solh, Member Representative of CGIAR
- Dr. Mark Holderness, Member Representative of GFAR

The General Conference of AARINENA agreed to hold the 13th GC meeting in Turkey during November 2014.