



International Astronomical Union
First Middle East Africa, Regional IAU Meeting
Cairo, Egypt, April 5-10, 2008
مؤتمر الشرق الأوسط وأفريقيا الإقليمي الأول للاتحاد الدولي الفلكي



I- General Information of the meeting

- 1- **Title of the meeting:** First Middle East Africa, Regional IAU Meeting
- 2- **Meeting website:** <http://www.mearim.cu.edu.eg>
- 3- **Venue and dates:** Cairo Egypt, April 5-10, 2008
- 4- **Total number of participants:** 121
- 5- **The nationalities which have been attending** are 40 Nationalities as follows:
Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Canada, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, India, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Zimbabwe.
- 6- **Main organizing body:** IAU
- 7- **Supporting Organizations:**
 - a- International Astronomical Union (IAU): amount of 25000 CHF as a grant distributed during the meeting for the applicants
 - b- Cairo University (CU): cover the registration fees of 4 participants from Cairo University.
 - c- Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT): cover the Internet facilities in the meeting room during the meeting
 - d- National Research Institute of Astronomy and Geophysics (NRIAG): cover the registration fees of 8 participants from NRIAG.
 - f- Computer Centre (SCC /CU): cover the meeting website publication in the centre server.
- 8- **Scientific Program** of Middle East and Africa IAU Regional meeting :
 - S1- Galaxies and Universe
 - S2- Space Astronomy and High Energy Astrophysics.
 - S3- Probing Solar and Stellar interiors
 - S4- The Dynamic Sun and Heliosphere
 - S5- Astronomical Data Management, Handling, Processing and Software
 - S6- Ground and Space Instrumentations and Telescopes
 - S7- Astronomical Research and Education in MEA countries, IYA and IHY activities.
 - S8- Training courses for young ME and Africa astronomers
 - S9- Presentation of National Astronomical Activities and suggested Programs

9-Scientific Organizing Committee (list members): Ali Ajabshirizadeh (Iran), Athem Alsabti (Iraq), C. Hassan Basurah (Saudi Arabia), Volker Bothmer (Germany), Catherina Cesarsky (France), Dirk Callebaut (Belgium), N. Guessoum (U.A.Emirates), Ahmed Hady (Chair, Egypt), Mouner Hamdy (Egypt), Ali Hussien (Kuwait), Tarek Hussain (Egypt), Abebe Kebede (Ethiopia), Atila Ozguc (Turkey), Amory-Mazaudier (France), Franco Porcelli (Italy), Nour Raouafi (Tunisia), Georgia Tsiropoula (Greece), Jaime Vilinga (Angola), M. I. Wanas (Egypt), Brian Warner (South Africa), David Webb (USA)

10- Invites Speakers: Catherine Cesarsky, R. C. Kraan-Korteweg: Kevin Krisciunas, Okkie de Jager, Franco Pacini, S. Khalil, Laurent Gizon, D.Callebaut, Mark Miesch, J-P Rozelot, S. K. Solanki, Giannina Poletto, A. Ozguc, J. M. Pasachoff , A. W. Alsabt, S. Koutchmy , P. Niarcho, M. I Wanas, V. Bothmer , Pedro Russo, K. Govender, N. Brosch,, E. S. BABAYEV, Ahmed Hady, Rosa M. Ros, S. Koutchmy , C. Ödman, Christine Amory-Mazaudier , Naoufel Ben Maaouia

II- Meeting Closing Session and recommendations

1st statement:

Declaration on the Iraq Observatory at the first Middle East-African Regional Meeting of the International Astronomical Union, Cairo, April 2008

The participants of the first MEARIM, comprising representatives from 40 countries of the Middle East and Africa, have discussed the situation of the damaged observatory on Mount Korek in Iraqi Kurdistan. This is an ambitious observatory, comprising a 3.5 meter optical telescope, a 1.25 meter telescope, and a 30meter for millimeter wave length Radio Telescope. The participants consider that such an observatory would be an important asset for the development of astronomy in the Middle East & Africa Region. The participants recommend that:

- a) A mission of experts to be organized to assess the state of the installations and evaluate the cost of bringing it to working conditions, as well as the cost of operating it. The Iraqi National Academy of Science could organize such a team from the International Scientific Community, Iraq and the Middle East to carry out this assessment, with the help of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) and other relevant regional and international organizations
- b) It is hoped that the result of this mission is such as to encourage the rebuilding of the Observatory, that means be found, at the Iraqi national level, and/or at the regional level,/and/or at the international level, to reconstruct the Observatory, provided that security conditions can be guaranteed by Iraqi officials
- c) The participants of MEARIM request that the IAU helps monitoring the evaluation of the present state of the Observatory and support the search for means to rebuild it.

2nd statement:

About MEARIM Group in IAU

The Meeting participants from 40 countries agreed to initiate a new working group at IAU Called “middle East and Africa Working group” .Such group would be useful in developing education and astronomy in MEA.

Driven by MEA delegates – request Hady from Egypt as first chair, and Philip A. Charles from South Africa as a co-chair

The members of the office of WG will be as follows:

- 1- Ali Hussain Abdullah (Kuwait)
- 2- Ajabshirizadeh Ali (Tabriz, Iran)
- 3- Athem W Alsabti (UK, Iraq)
- 4- Salman Jabor Althani (Qatar)
- 5- Abdel latif Amine(Tunisia)
- 6- Walid J. Azzam (Bahrain)
- 7- Shafi Nebiha Bedru, (Ethiopian)
- 8- Segun Olawale Bolaji (Nigeria)
- 9- Noah Brosch (Israel)
- 10- Kevin Govender (South Africa)
- 11- Ocker C de Jager (South Africa)
- 12- Susan Murabona Oduori (Kenya)

3rd statement

1. IYA2009

- a. Suggested approach
 - i. National point of contact / Champion
 - ii. National Steering Committee
 - iii. Email List (National and Regional)
 - iv. Status of Astronomy Survey
 - v. National plan
 - vi. Regional Plan
- b. Important to prepare for many opportunities that are already available
- c. In Africa:
 - i. Request for support from ICSU Africa

4th statement

About the Next MEARIM

The Meeting participants from 41 countries agreed that the next MEARIM would be held in South Africa during year 2011,

5th Statement

IAU president Catherine Cesarsky notes:

- 1 Great presentations –
- 2 good inter community sharing (solar, stellar, galaxy, etc)
- 3 Good IYA presentations
- 4 Suggestions for cooperation and collaborations , access to telescopes (SA, Israel, others)
- 5- Working Group needs to be well structured, and does not necessarily need to be under the aegis of IAU It could:
 - i. Draw a list of existing infrastructure, performances and access
 - ii. Technical know how throughout continent.
 - iii. Education and Outreach
- 6- Thanks to organizers, in particular Ahmed Hady