

# Opening Addresses

## Opening Address by Mr Ali Bin Saad Al Kuwari

*Undersecretary of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, Qatar*



All praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds, the blessings and peace be upon the noblest of all messengers. Peace, grace and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

His Excellency, Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, respected guests, dear audience:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all on my behalf and on behalf of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture. It also gives me pleasure to convey to you the greetings of His Excellency Mr Ali Bin Sa'eed Al Khayareen, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture. We wish you a happy stay amongst us.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture has made a practice of cooperating with regional and international organizations in supporting agricultural activity and its various branches locally, regionally and internationally, proceeding from eminent instructions and enlightened policies of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar and His Highness Sheikh Jassem Bin Hamad Al Thani, the Heir Apparent in supporting Gulf, Arabian, regional and international cooperation for the common benefit of all.

Today, the International Workshop on Protected Agriculture in the Arabian Peninsula is held as a result of the continued cooperation between the Ministry and the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), which has kept on supporting the agricultural sector in different countries of the world.

Providing food to the world population has become a major issue, the consequences of which are becoming more serious day by day. The effort to increase production has become an important struggle between scientists and various factors of nature. Perhaps protected agriculture, with all its technologies, can be one of the best solutions, especially in areas which are suffering from the triangle of natural impediments namely soil, water and weather. From this point, benefiting from world experience in supporting local programs is considered inevitable. Likewise, regional cooperation—preventing doubling of research work within the countries of one

region—is a matter of policy in accelerating the process of problem-solving, and effort and money—saving both of which serves the interests of all.

No doubt, the experiences and information that are put forward and the meaningful scientific discussions held will enrich this meeting and strengthen our mutual cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you of our strong desire to support the activities of this Workshop and that the Ministry will serve fully to achieve success.

Lastly, I express our gratitude again to ICARDA and the donors for their generous funding and support in holding this Workshop on time and in selecting Qatar as the venue.

I would also like to thank very much all the members of the Joint Organizing Committee who worked hard actively and earnestly in the arrangement of this Workshop.

Thanks to all those who contributed at any stage of the preparation and execution of this workshop.

Peace and blessings of Allah be upon all.

## Opening Address by Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy

*Director General, ICARDA*



Mr Ali Bin Saad Al Kuwari, The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, colleagues and friends:

It is my pleasure and delight to be present here with you in this meeting this morning, in this first workshop within the context of the Arabian Peninsula Regional Program of the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas. The Workshop will be addressing a topic of great importance not only to the Gulf, but also for other areas in the world. Protected agriculture is the most dynamic agriculture system worldwide. The different components need a lot of manipulation and a lot of understanding, for several avenues of science are involved and in this Workshop we are going to address them. The system itself is the art of optimizing production per unit area and per cubic meter of water. This optimization is the main issue and it covers water-use efficiency and fertigation. During this week, a lot of colleagues and experts from around the world are going to share their experiences with those of our colleagues from the Gulf.

The important issues of physical structure, integrated pest management and other management techniques will be addressed in this Workshop. The postharvest aspect is also important, because it starts early in the process of the other management systems.

I hope that you will have a very fruitful meeting. One issue which we are hoping that we could achieve is networking. We hope that a network between colleagues who are involved in this process will exist in the Gulf; therefore, exchange of information will be a basic issue.

I would like to thank the people of Qatar who are known for their hospitality, which we are all enjoying, and on behalf of all of you we would like to thank His Royal Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani, Prince of Qatar. I am sure that we are in very good hands. Also, let me specifically thank His Excellency the Minister Ali Bin Sa'eed Al Khayareen, and our colleagues from the Ministry of Agriculture and thanks to the Government of Qatar for hosting this very important meeting. We look forward to hearing your recommendations. Thank you.

## Opening Address by Mr Abdulrahman Al Mahmoud

*Director, Department of Agricultural and Water Research (DAWR)*



Your Excellency, Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, Director General, ICARDA, dear brothers:

The Agricultural and Water Research Department has the honor to welcome all of you on the opening of the International Workshop on Protected Agriculture in Arabian Peninsula which is one of the most important activities of the APRP. It is of our pleasure to assure you that, all of our resources are at your disposal to assist your workshop.

We hope that the discussion will include all aspects of protected agriculture, looking for the benefits from the gathering of experts and participants. Finally, we wish that the APRP will fulfill its goals to serve the agricultural sector in the participating countries with the cooperation of the International Center for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA).

Best wishes for a successful workshop and I wish you all a pleasant stay in Qatar.

## Opening Address by Dr Mahmoud B. Solh

*Director of International Cooperation, ICARDA*



Your Excellency Engineer Ali Bin Saad Al Kuwari, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, the Director General of ICARDA, distinguished delegates, colleagues and friends:

This important activity is part of the Arabian Peninsula Regional Program, which is supported by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development as well as the International Fund for Agricultural Development. At the first Steering Committee of the Second Phase of this project—in late September 1996—the priority areas of research were identified. In the First Regional Technical Meeting—which was held at ICARDA's Headquarters in early March 1997—it was agreed to focus on four major themes for agriculture development in the Arabian Peninsula. These are rangeland rehabilitation and management, irrigated forages and livestock; protected agriculture; abiotic stresses, and on-farm water use and irrigation management. Activities in these themes are conducted in collaboration among the national agriculture research systems in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula—Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen—as well as ICARDA.

The major goal of our important activity today is to develop a strategy for the improvement of protected agriculture in the Arabian Peninsula for the coming decade. We will be focusing on greenhouse design and management, water-use efficiency and fertigation, integrated plant production and protection, networking both within the Arabian Peninsula and with centers of excellence of all over the world, and human-resource development. This Workshop is providing us with the opportunity to know the state of the art in protected agriculture in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as in centers of excellence all over the world. We all look forward to the deliberations of this Workshop.

In closing, I would like to thank Your Excellency and the Government of Qatar for hosting this meeting. Appreciation is expressed to the donors for their support and their encouragement.

Wishing you fruitful deliberations and a successful meeting.