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Address By
Dr. Munir Ahmad, Patron ISOSS

- Hon. Tanveer Ashraf Kaira,
Minister of Finance, Planning & Development, Govt. of the Punjab
- Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin,
Vice-Chancellor, University of Gujrat
- Respected delegates from Iran, Germany, Libya, USA
- My colleagues, Students, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I, on my behalf and on behalf of Islamic Countries Society of Statistical Sciences take this opportunity to thank you for sparing your precious time from such a busy schedule. I know that you are visiting around the Province of Punjab for improving its infrastructure, governance and removing numerous ills that itch public in general and government in particular.

I congratulate Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, Vice-Chancellor a strong administrator, for making strenuous efforts to develop this newly established University of Gujrat at par with any international university. His proven track record shows his capabilities, competence and will to work for the university.

I deeply appreciate University's programmes to create alliances amongst statisticians by organizing seminars for exchange of knowledge and experiences for better understanding and advancement of progressing areas of engineering, health, industrial, computer and telecom technology. It is our Government's cherished desire that we must make intensive and sustained struggle to expand the horizons of Statistics and Social Sciences which facilitate building of a system free of exploitation, inequality and repression and helps to formulate plans and policies to eliminate poverty from the Society and to improve standards of living of the people.

Statistical scientists of academia should share their scientific potential and expand their database. This will help Pakistan by bringing technology to their door-steps which, of course, could be utilized for the betterment of the Muslim Ummah.

The society, while celebrating its 20 years journey, was established way back in 1988, during the first Islamic Countries Conference on Statistical Sciences held at Lahore with the objectives to:

- bring together research workers and practitioners in statistical sciences from Islamic Countries through mutual exchange program,
- organize and strengthen a central information system by establishing data banks and centres of information.
- associate statistically developed countries to help in developing and transferring statistical technology to Islamic Countries.
- organize conferences, seminars, colloquia, workshops, short courses, and any other means of communication helpful in exchanging scientific ideas.

I feel really proud of its existence, as the society had held nine International Conferences at Lahore, Morocco, Malaysia, and Indonesia, and numerous national

conferences, seminars and workshops. The 10th Conference will hopefully be held in Egypt some time in 2009.

The Society had the honour of organizing Fourth Meeting of Heads of National Statistical Organizations of the OIC Member Countries at Lahore on behalf of Statistics Division, Government of Pakistan and Statistical, Economic & Social Research and Training Centre (SESRIC-OIC), Ankara, Turkey. At each conference more than 30 countries had been taking active part.

I feel pride to inform that ISOSS is the only society that helps and encourages researchers and M.Phil. / Ph.D. students around Pakistan. So far, more than 40 students have completed their M.Phil./Ph.D. Degrees under the guidance of the Research Guidance Cell and about more than 50 students are in the process of finalizing their M.Phil./Ph.D. researches.

Another landmark of the society, Pakistan Journal of Statistics (PJS) is an internationally recognized journal which is the only Pakistani journal recognized by Higher Education Commission, Government of Pakistan on the basis of its impact factor 1.2 (2004). The Pakistan Journal of Statistics has been graded "B" by FIDES Journal Rating 2002 among 2000 journals in all disciplines.

There are 57 Muslim countries with more than one billion population, which account for more than 25% of the World population with a very low GNP. Everywhere the physical and human resources remain under-utilized. We need collective self-reliance in the Islamic Community, mutual cooperation and extensive exchange of scientists. Hence statistics plays a key role in the socio-economic and scientific development of a country. The current state of Muslim world under-development is due to decline in the knowledge of science and technology where Muslims had played a leading role in the past. Let me share the administrative capabilities of Hazrat Omar (R) who conducted household expenditure survey of different strata of people to find out the household expenditure so that he could fix scholarships and benefits for the needy. In one of the Scandinavian countries, they introduced social security system called Omar Social Security System. I don't know if Pakistan ever institute Social Security System. If the government wishes, ISOSS can help in developing such as system atleast for Punjab.

I find this opportunity to narrate some of the experiences, the society had met with the ideological organizations like Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz). The society had done marvelous works in the field of research and statistics and had will to do a lot more. Society had a dream of establishing a Statistics House in Lahore, which would provide state of the art facilities for research under one roof. In 1990 delegation of ISOSS headed by its Pattern-in-Chief H.E. Dr. Abdullah Bin Omar Nasseef, Ex-Vice-President Majlis A Shoura, and President, World Muslim Congress, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia met Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the then Chief Minister Punjab who was very pleased to sanction a piece of two kanals land in Sabzazar Scheme, Lahore for establishing the Statistics House to be named as Nawaz Sharif Statistics House. The resources for construction of building were committed to be provided by the Muslim World League, Saudi Arabia. Incidentally, the dream of the society became under clouds due to Kuwait War, which consumed a lot of resources of Islamic countries and organizations leaving very less for organization of Islamic research.

The society believes that the dream of having a Statistics House will come true one day and with this dream society is working and progressing into a professional organization, which has hundreds of professional statisticians working for the betterment of Muslim Ummah, in general and Pakistan in particular. I request Honourable Sirdar Dost Muhammad Khan Khosa and Honourable Tanveer Ashraf Kaira to sanction an amount of Rupees Five Million to build “Sharif Statistics House”.

As I said earlier, statistics and information are the basic ingredients of any development plan. It is my august opinion that a Council of Statisticians be set up to look into various aspects of economic, technological, scientific and agro-development of Muslim Ummah. I believe the basic informations, accurately collected and scientifically analyzed are the imperatives of planning in the countries.

I see ISOSS as a World Forum that can be managed on a collected vision of its active members. Dignity of top statisticians both in public and private sectors is a pre-requisite to Society’s strategy and action plans.

We need to strengthen ISOSS by establishing chapters in various areas and different cities and countries, so as to make it a responsible part of sharing in upgradation of Statistical Systems. ISOSS may be made an authentic statistical voice of Pakistani Statisticians.

In the past, I proposed to institute a number of awards for young statisticians which could not be implemented for want of responses from statisticians, students, teachers and professionals. I am going to propose in the business session a few awards in the names of Dr. Zia-ud-Din – Dr. Iqbal, Col. Nazir Ahmad – S.M. Ishaq, Sultan S. Hashmi – Muhammad Afzal and moreover ISOSS Awards and hope that this time, help will be received from public, government and statisticians for these awards.

At the end, I thank my team of volunteers mostly students, from National College of Business Administration and Economics, especially Dr. Muhammad Hanif, Prof. Akhlaq Ahmad, Dr. Suleman Aziz Lodhi, Dr. Ghulam Mustafa Habibullah, Dr. A.R. Chaudhry, Muhammad Iftikhar, Muhammad Imtiaz and Saif-ur-Rehman for their untiring work. I also thank members of the University of Gujrat team who worked hard in organizing the Conference under the leadership of Dr. Mohammad Nizamuddin. Special thanks are due to Mr. Zahoor Ahmad, Miss Atia Hanif, Miss Fozia Maqsood and others.

We are all grateful to Chief Minister Punjab and Minister of Finance and Planning & Development for sparing their precious time to inaugurate the Conference.