

Review Report on The 1st International Conference on Drug Discovery and Therapy February 4 - 7, 2008, Dubai, UAE



INTRODUCTION

The 1st International Conference on Drug Design and Discovery (ICDDD) was held from Feb. 4 -7, 2008 at Dubai, UAE. ICDDD 2008 was the first major international conference and exhibition of the series, which aimed to present cutting edge advances in various disciplines of drug design and discovery. Over 600 leading industrial and academic experts from 58 countries around the globe presented their findings in the form of Plenary Lectures, Invited Lectures, Session Lectures and Posters at this four-day conference. The ICDDD 2008 offered an in-depth assessment of the challenges involved in the dynamic and fast moving field of drug discovery and development bringing together leading chemists, pharmacologists, biotechnologists, and other allied professionals to discuss and present the latest important developments in the field.



ORGANIZERS: HIGHER COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND EUREKA SCIENCE

Under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan, the event was co-organized by Eureka Science and Higher College of Technology with the venue being the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, Dubai, UAE.



DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTER: THE VENUE

Dubai, the host city, is the region's business and tourism centre which is connected to all international markets. The city is also famous as the regional trading hub and gateway to the rest of the Middle East. The visitors coming to Dubai could enjoy a whole range of different experiences which included elements of adventure, contrast, discovery and surprise. Dubai World Trade Center, the venue of the conference, offered a comprehensive range of facilities catering to all types of meetings and major international conventions.



THE BOARD

The Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Organizing Committee of ICDDD were Prof. Richard R. Ernst (Nobel Laureate) and Prof. Atta-ur-Rahman, FRS, respectively.

The Organizing Secretaries of various sections of the conference, prominent scientists in their respective fields, were: Magid Abou-Gharbia (Wyeth Research, Collegeville, PA, USA), Charles Cantor (SEQUENOM, Inc., CA, USA), Erik De Clercq (Rega Institute for Medical Research, Belgium), Ben M. Dunn (University of Florida, FL, USA), Stephen T. Furlong (Discovery Medicine, AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, DE, USA), Kenji Izuhara (Saga Medical School, Japan), Levon M. Khachigian (University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia), Chandra Prakash (Pfizer Global Research and Development, CT, USA), Peter E. Nielsen (The Panum Institute, Denmark), Allen B. Reitz (Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical Research and Development, PA, USA), Patrice Talaga (Global Chemistry R&D, UCB S.A., Belgium), Istvan Toth (University of Queensland, Australia) and Michael J. Waring (The University of Cambridge, England).



MAJOR TRACKS COVERED

The major topics of discussion related to drug design and discovery at the conference included: Cancer; Cardiovascular Diseases; CNS; Pharmacogenomics; Protein & Peptides; Inflammation & Allergy; Drug Delivery & Safety; Drug Discovery Informatics; Drug Metabolism; Medicinal and Combinatorial Chemistry; Nanotechnology; Emerging Biomarkers & Drug Targets; Case Studies of Successful Drug Discovery and Development.



SALIENT FEATURES OF THE EVENT

Meet the Nobel Laureates

One of the salient and unique features of the event was "**Meet the Nobel Laureates**" session, which was hosted by Higher College of Technology (HCT). HCT had made magnificent arrangements, proper to the occasion. Held on Feb. 3, 2008 in Abu Dhabi, UAE, the event witnessed the presence of 11 Nobel Laureates. The participating Nobel Laureates were Prof. J. Robin Warren, Prof. Dr. Robert Huber, Prof. Dr. Klaus von Klitzing, Prof. Yuan T. Lee, Prof. Richard R. Ernst, Prof. M. Veltman, Prof. Sir Harry Kroto, Prof. Jim Cronin, Prof. Johann Deisenhofer, Prof. Kurt Wuthrich and Prof. J. Robert Schrieffer.

Inaugural Ceremony

The impressive inaugural ceremony of the event commenced on Feb. 4, 2008. His Highness Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan, Minister for Higher Education and Research, Dubai was the Chief Guest, who welcomed and appreciated the combined efforts of Eureka Science and Higher College of Technology for organizing such an event of multidimensional importance. Amongst others who addressed the ceremony were: Dr. Richard R. Ernst, Chairman of the Organizing Committee of ICDDD, Prof. Atta-ur-Rahman, FRS, Co-Chairman and Dr. Matthew Honan, Director of Eureka Science Ltd.

Regular Sessions

During Feb. 4 and Feb. 7, 2008, speaker sessions were held in four halls of International Convention and Exhibition Centre of Dubai World Trade Center. All the sessions were well attended and appreciated by the participants. Poster presentation was also conducted simultaneously with the lecture sessions, where the presenters displayed their posters, which were visited by a number of delegates.

Exhibition

Apart from lecture series and poster presentation, there was exhibition as well, where different companies had displayed their publications and other material. The participating exhibitors were: New Chemistry Horizons Laboratories Ltd., Dubai Pharmacy College & Dubai Medical College for Girls, DUBIOTECH - Dubai Biotechnology & Research Park, Bentham Science Publishers Ltd., Nowicky Pharma, FQS Poland, Chembridge Corporation, Emirates Airlines, WYETH, Phoenix Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Prous Science, a Thomson Scientific Business, Higher Colleges of Technology, RAK Medical & Health Sciences University and Iris Biotech GmbH.



MEDIA PARTNERS & SPONSORS

The event was sponsored by Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Bentham Science Publishers, Science Magazine, GVK Biosciences, COMSTECH, AK Medical and Health Sciences University, The Dubai Biotechnology and Research Park (DuBiotech), Dubai Medical College for Girls, Hoffmann-La Roche Inc., and The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).



ICDDD: A SUCCESS MEASURE

ICDDD has been a great success both in its conduct and impact. Being the first ever held conference of this caliber in the region, ICDDD has proved to be a good beginning, which will have far reaching impact on Drug Design and Discovery. At the same time it has been a great success with its smooth conduct, wide range of subjects covered, participation of large number of delegates, fruitful deliberations and immense response of the participants towards discovering Drug Design and Dubai together.



CONCLUSION

The Success of the 1st ICDDD is in keeping with the vision and mission of the organizers, who had envisioned of it as being a good beginning as the first mega event in the region on the subject of Drug Design and Discovery. As the Chairman, Dr. Ernst in his welcome note said;

"The conference will host leading scientists and Nobel laureates from academia and industry worldwide, to discuss the latest developments in drug design and discovery. The conference aims to provide many interesting perspectives on how the science and technology of drug discovery is changing and will continue to change in the modern era."

The conference came up as the living example of this message and it has set up stage for success of conferences coming up in the series.