

REPORT



YOUTH AND THEIR SOCIAL IMPACT



INTRODUCTION:

International Human Rights Observer (IHRO) is a NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and working together with Governments, United Nations and other International institutions to promote and protect the basic fundamental human rights of the masses declared in the universal charter of human rights of United Nations to build a global village of lasting peace, social, and economic justice and development for the 21st century. It is an independent, non-profitable, non-political, and non-governmental registered human rights organization under social welfare act 1961 in Pakistan, incorporated as INC in USA and not for Profit Company limited in the UK. To participate in the conferences and other events of the United Nations is one our mandate and part of activities as a advocacy, training, research and monitoring member organization of the United Nations.

ABOUT THE UNESCO NGO FORUM 2017

The 7th UNESCO NGO Forum 2017 was organized by UNESCO and the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee in partnership with the Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Foundation (MiSK) from 3-4 May 2017 in the Riyadh, Saudi Arabia .The Forum Secretariat invited renowned NGOs, youth representatives and inspiring experts, philanthropists and social innovators around the theme of "Youth and their Social Impact". The Forum was attended by more than 400 NGOs and over 2,100 delegates from more than 70 countries.

This is the first time the event has been held in the Arab region. The two-day discussions highlighted the necessary engagement and integration of young people to strengthen their social impact and active citizenship in the society. tackling issues such as digital illiteracy, youth unemployment, the destruction of cultural heritage, climate change and especially the crucial role of youth in shaping policies and creating jobs, the Forum called on NGOs, governments and the private sector to scale up young people's initiatives locally, nationally and internationally, to integrate young people at all levels of the public and private sectors and accompany them in developing the competences they need to maximize their active citizenship and social impact, particularly through non-formal and informal learning.

Previous editions of the forum have been held in Beijing (China), Paris (France), Querétaro (Mexico), Sozopol (Bulgaria) and Yamoussoukro (Côte d'Ivoire). They were dedicated to themes such as peacebuilding, access to water, women and poverty, rapprochement of cultures or the role of youth in safeguarding cultural heritage. They have been behind the creation of several grassroots initiatives that contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's objective

IHRO PARTICIPATION IN THE UNESCO NGO FORUM:

As a member organization with ECOSOC of the United Nations, IHRO was invited to attend the NGO Liaison Committee Forum and MiSK Foundation in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in May 2017. The subject of the Forum was 'Youth and their Social Impact', with a focus on equal access and sustainable progress on global youth issues. The Forum was organized in association with UNESCO the Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Foundation (MiSK), who generously sponsored the attendance, travel and costs of all international delegates. IHRO founder President only participated in this historical forum on behalf of his organization. This opportunity was a great one for IHRO, as we currently have no members or member societies in the Middle East. We have also found that attending UN and specifically UNESCO events is vital to our mission and our ability to engage with policy makers, funders and change-makers on the global stage. This Forum was the first UNESCO conference to be held in the Arab world and the largest ever gathering of international NGOs and charitable bodies in the Middle East.

TOPICS OF THE FORUM:

The Forum mainly focused on the following topics through conferences and panel discussions

- ➤ Youth Engagement and Its Potential for Social Change
- > Optimizing the Impact of the Digital Native and Managing the Risk
- > Educating for a Sustainable Future
- ➤ What Skills for Young People Today?

Breakout sessions with sub-themes:

- Youth Entrepreneurship and Volunteering: Promoting Engagement at Local and International Levels
- Protection of Cultural Heritage: Can Young People Make a Difference?
- ➤ Using Digital Tools for the Promotion of Social Interaction and Engagement
- Maximizing the Fight Against Climate Change for Sustainable Development
- > Fostering Equal Opportunities for Young Men and Women

SPEAKERS OF OPENING CEREMONEY:



The forum was opened with a video message by Mrs. Irina Bokova, General Director of UNESCO, followed by greetings and official speechs from H.E. Dr. Ali Nasser Alghafis, Minister of Labor and Social Development of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Eric Falt, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO and Mr. Philippe Beaussant, Chairperson of the UNESCO-NGO Liaison Committee.

Mrs. Irina Bokova said that the forum is focused on developing practical ideas to empower the youth of the world to make a positive social impact. In her opening address Irina Bokova said: "This first NGO forum to be held in the Arab region reflects the depth of partnership between Saudi Arabia and UNESCO, building on shared aspirations and common goals to take forward the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The world has never been so young, and it is getting younger every day. Together we must do everything to support youth to advance new forms of dialogue and cooperation to tackle the challenges facing all societies. Today more than ever we need the ideas, imagination, creativity and resilience of young people to build a better future for all. This is the importance of this ground breaking forum

His Excellency Dr Ali Al-Ghafis, Saudi Arabian Minister of Labor and Social Development, said: "We must liberate the ability of youth around the world to create opportunities for the future. Here in the Kingdom, the MiSK Foundation is creating initiatives which empower youth to help realize the ambition of the National Transformation Plan and Vision 2030.

Eric Falt, Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Public Information, UNESCO, said: "Youth is a strength and they have a hunger for social impact and change. Youth matter because they are the guardians of the future and they have the energy and creativity to make a change in the world."

FIRST DAY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS

Following the opening ceremony the sessions started by the keynote speaker Mr. Jacques Attali, Founder & President, Positive Planet, and then a session by Panel Keynote speaker, H.E. Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs, United Arab Emirates, Setting the scene: "Youth Engagement and its Potential for Social Change" which was a very interesting session as to see a young woman in the Gulf region with this high position it was indeed very inspiring and encouraging. After the sessions took place the panels on the same topic of "Youth Engagement and its Potential for Social Change" with 5 panel speakers:

- H.R.H. Banderi A.R. Al Faisal, Director General and Board Member, King Khaled Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Ms. Hila Azadzoy, Co-founder and Head of Academics, Kiron Open Higher Education, Germany/Afghanistan
- Ms. Bahia Hariri, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Member of Parliament, Lebanon
- Ms. Tanzila Khan, Author & Disabled Rights Activist, Pakistan
- Mr. Benjamin Lough, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, University of Illinois, USA

The above speakers shared their experiences on the topic and how they deal with relevant issues. In particular Ms. Hila Azadzoy was amazing young woman with a great story. President IHRO made the most

of the opportunities and initiated discussions with most of them and explored ideas and interest among our organization. He took the chance and introduced himself to delegates in order to open collaborations.

Ms. Hayat Sindi, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, After the Break Ms. Hayat sindi Co-founder, Diagnostics for All, Saudi Arabia talked in a session under the title "My Advice to My 20-year Old Self".

Later after her talk the following panel speakers opened discussion on "Optimizing the Impact of the Digital Native".

- Mr. Faisal Al Saif, Saudi Arabia- Moderator
- Mr. Kamel Al-Asmar, Founder, Nakweh, United Arab Emirates
- Mr. Jonathan Birdwell, Head of Policy, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, United Kingdom
- Mr. Dejan Bojanic, Vice-President, European Youth Forum, Sweden
- Ms. Samiha Khelifa, Associate Professor, Sousse University, Tunisia

The panel sessions were on basic talks, the moderator of the panel was very relevant and vibrant. All speakers delivered very comprehensive talk and experiences with participants.

After a break, the following speakers have succeeded each other:

Mr. Chid Liberty, CEO, Liberty and Justice, speaking related to Creating Social Justice through Economic Opportunity

Ms. Khalida Brohi, Founder, Sughar, Pakistan

Mr. Manyang Reath Kher, Founder, Humanity Helping Sudan Project, Sudan – Moderator

Mr. John Defterios, Presenter, CNN, USA

IHRO-Participation: After the session, President IHRO shared a fruitful discussion with Ms. khalida Brohi who did an influential and motivated speech. She briefed about her work living in USA now a days. Mr. Sulehri also met other speakers and exchange experiences on the topics.

The Breakout Sessions of First Day:

The breakout sessions that followed covered 3 different themes:

- > Youth Entrepreneurship and Volunteering: Promoting Engagement at Local and international Levels
- ➤ Protection of Cultural Heritage: Can Young People Make a Difference?
- ➤ Using Digital Tools for the Promotion of Social Interaction and Engagement

IHRO Participation: IHRO President participated attended the first theme which was Youth Entrepreneurship and Volunteering: Promoting Engagement at Local and International levels and participated in dialogues and questions.

SECOND DAY SESSIONS AND SPEAKERS



Mr. Jimmy Wales, Founder as a Key Note Speaker:

Second day was very important in which Mr. Jimmy Wales, Founder; Wikipedia, USA was the key note speaker where he gave a very inspirational speech about his journey.

Speakers in the sessions focused on the necessity of involve all segments of societies in tackling the issue of climate change and the significance of education in that regard.

Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Essa, Minister of education, said that Saudi schools and universities have made direct initiatives that made a difference in supporting the educational process, while depending on individual efforts filled with ambition to achieve a bright future for the present and future generations. Al-Essa noted the positive role of these initiatives that coincide with the ministry's plans and policies that focus on issues that are of interest to the society such as the environment, water resources, desertification and sustainable development. He said the environment of education is adequate to research many of the issues that are of concern to the international community. He expressed the ministry's readiness to cooperate with NGOs in seeking solutions to the issues related to environment and sustainable development within the framework of the Kingdom's efforts in that regard. Saudi Arabia has adopted the goals of the landmark Paris accord of 2015 that sparked an important change in countries' sustainable development agendas. Under that agreement, countries have committed to redirect their economies toward achieving justice and sustainable environment.

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UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova delivered a closing speech thanking MiSK Foundation and NGO-UNESCO for "giving voice to youth aspirations.

IHRO Participation: IHRO President Mr. Khalid Sulehri met with **Mr. Jimmy Wales** after the session and appreciates his success story in the word.Mr. Jimmy Walse also appreciated the work of IHRO and warmly offered his volunteer services for the promotion of human rights through his project. Mr. Sulehri also met with **Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Essa**, Minister of education for further cooperation for mutual projects in future. He met also many other delegates for future collaboration on human rights and sustainable development projects engaging youth on each and every level.



Young change-makers from UNESCO's NGO partners and UNESCO Youth Networks, many of whom have overcome obstacles such as disability, inequality, war, and bereavement, shared their stories and spoke of their commitment to projects that positively impact the world around them.

INVOLVING YOUTH TO FIND SOLUTIONS

"As a young education leader, it was an exciting moment which made me value our organization's contribution to ESD," said Victoria Ibiwoye from Nigeria, who had participated in the regional workshop for ESD youth leadership workshop in Nairobi. "I am so glad to see more attention on youth people and our impact to the society. Several decades ago, youth participation was almost invisible and today, it's interesting to see the direction of the NGO Forum which goes to show that youth are really taking a stand to impact generations to come."

The high-level forum included professional speakers and dignitaries such as H.E Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs (UAE). "Youth suffer a lot from non-interest of the government, we need to find solutions with them," she said, challenging the government to support youth in their endeavors. "

Ms.Tanzila Khan, a social entrepreneur from Pakistan advised youth leaders to get excited about creating solutions to existing problems through volunteering. Khan mentioned the role of her organization as an example of how young people can build sustainable initiatives. Jimmy Wales, Founder of Wikipedia and the Wikimedia Foundation, shared lessons on resilience and rising from failure. She sent a strong message to the youths about the fear of failure. "Fail faster but enjoy you along the way," Wales said.

SHARING IDEAS AND CREATING NETWORKS:

For the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Youth leaders from the Asian and other regions, the forum was an opportunity to reunite and discuss ways to build a stronger advocacy network for ESD. They shared ideas such as creating a visibility framework to promote individual actions at the country level, mobilizing other young people to share ideas, tools and skills to help their grassroots activities. The youth leaders also supported young activists from the region to seize local and international opportunities for development.

Ms. Sherihan Akkawi, ESD youth leader from Beirut, said that the ESD Forum motivated her to believe in what she is doing and continue her job in spreading awareness on sustainable development goals. The forum showed her how important education for sustainable development is for young people to grow with a sustainable mindset in addressing the complexities of the world today.

The forum also set a trend by introducing an opportunity to increase funding for youth-led initiatives. This was done through a pitch competition to identify the most promising project or proposal from an NGO that fosters engagement amongst young people to create positive social change. The forum was highly successful in bringing together states, non-governmental organizations, academia, and youth leaders in shaping the future. According to Dejan Bojanic, a representative of the European Youth Forum, discussions at the forum centered on issues of importance to the preservation of human rights while entrenching the merits of inclusion. "The forum created a rare space in Riyadh where women could make active choices, where we listened to role models and discuss feminism. It created a space to learn about protecting human dignity of people with disabilities. Human rights organizations, no matter where they are, do not belong to states but to humanity. The first step to empathize and ally with someone else's struggle is to understand it. That is why I went to Saudi Arabia," Bojanic said.



The Mohammed bin Salman Foundation The MiSK Foundation has at the heart of its work the belief that nurturing and supporting those that work to support learning and leadership is critical to tomorrow's future. As part of this work, this year the Foundation announced initiated the MiSK NGO Pitch Competition on the occasion part of the UNESCO NGO Forum 2017 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The objective the MiSK NGO Pitch Competition was to identify the most promising project or proposal from an NGO that fosters engagement amongst young people to create positive social change. Five youth-led initiatives were shortlisted from a pool of over 70 applications. While the winner won a grant of \$30,000 as well as profiling by the MiSK Foundation, others were awarded \$20,000 each.

The jury of the competition was keen to select the most outstanding projects or presentations from non-profit organizations working in the field of encouraging young people to lead the social change positively among the 70 participating organizations from around the world.

The Award was announced and honorable **Mr. Bader bin Mohammed Al-Asaker**, secretary-general of the MiSK Charity Foundation, presented the award and the foundation's shield during a ceremony to the following.

Water Youth Network (An International NGO) was selected first by the Jury and received \$30,000 fund on the concluding day of the seventh UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) NGO Forum 2017.

MiSK has also awarded the foundation's shield and \$20,000 each to Hive Colab of Uganda, Fa.Vela organization of Brazil, International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals (CIOFF NGO) of Paris and SOM Editorial Colectiva.

The jury members of MiSK NGO Pitch Competition were Wikipedia Founder Jimmy Wales, MiSK Foundation representative Shaima Hamidaddin and Alexander Schischlik, chief of youth and sport sector for social and human sciences at UNESCO.













OFFICIAL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SEVENTH UNESCO NGO FORUM Organized in partnership with the MiSK Foundation Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 3-4 May 2017

- 1. We, the participating NGOs of the Seventh UNESCO NGO Forum, the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee and UNESCO, in partnership with the MiSK Foundation, held under the theme of Youth and their Social Impact, welcome the large international nature of the event. For the past two days, we have come together with over 400 NGOs, from over 70 countries and over 2,000 registered delegates, 70 per cent of whom were under the age of 35 years.
- 2. We further note that the Forum is the first such event to take place in the Arab region and are grateful to the MiSK Foundation and the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their hospitality and for creating a space for open dialogue about important global issues.
- 3. Plenary sessions were held exploring issues such as: Youth Engagement and Its Potential for Social Change, Optimizing the Impact of the Digital Native, Cultural Diversity as an Essential Dimension of Intercultural Dialogue, What Skills for Young People Today, Optimizing the Power of Youth for Peacebuilding, Educating for a Sustainable Future and The Voice of Youth: Their Vision of Social Change.
- 4. We are grateful for the inspiring key-note speeches given by leaders from the NGO community, governments, international organizations and the cultural, sports and business sectors.
- 5. We acknowledge the highly interactive nature of the Forum, which utilized technology including real-time polling and a conference app in order to maximise participation by delegates.
- 6. We praise the entrants and finalists who suggested ideas in a competition for the MiSK Global NGO Award, noting the winner, Water Youth Network, and finalists Hive COLAB, FA.VELA, SOM Editorial Collectiva and CIOFF. We are grateful to the MiSK Foundation for generously funding the \$30,000 prize for the winning NGO project and \$20,000 each for the finalists. We also thank the panellists.

- 7. **Six breakout sessions were held for a 'Roadmap to Impact'**. These enabled participants to debate key topics and make recommendations, which were as follows:
 - **7.1 Workshop 1:** Youth and Entrepreneurship and Volunteering: Promoting Engagement at Local and International Levels. Delegates recommended that young people need to be facilitated to engage in dialogue with leaders at the local, national and international levels; NGOs need capacity-building to be able to create impactful opportunities and programming with young people; there should be better outreach to the most excluded youth in society, including those with special needs; companies should offer more volunteering opportunities for staff, possibly embedded in contracts as part of corporate responsibility; there must be a more scientific approach to NGO impact; more opportunities should be given for young people to be paid while working for NGOs; opportunities should be created for retirees to become volunteers so that they can transfer their experience to young people; funding should be boosted for monitoring and financial management in projects and to enable NGOs to recruit consultants.
 - **7.2 Workshop 2:** Protection of Cultural Heritage: Can Young People Make a Difference. Attendees called for support for intergenerational dialogue and education as tools for the transmission of cultural values and traditions; innovative solutions for the promotion of cultural diversity and cultural exchange including new spaces to facilitate this, some of which may use digital technology; boosting the role of peer-to-peer and nonformal education to increase youth participation; and the involvement of youth at international fora on the subject.
 - **7.3** Workshop 3: Using Digital Tools for the Promotion of Social Interaction and Engagement. On security and privacy, delegates suggested a global ethics code for the digital and social media arenas and called for an international dialogue in which NGOs would take a lead. Delegates also called for a labour right of being able to disconnect from the online world, noting that NGOs must also have this right. Attendees suggested building more bridges between NGOs and technology companies that are hired to develop applications for NGO projects. **7.4** Workshop 4: Fostering Equal Opportunities for Young Men and Women. Attendees suggested that there is a need to include the private sector more; that challenging questions can be included in the educational curriculum; policies should be improved addressing new challenges; and platforms created for stakeholders to collaborate, including beyond this conference using social media.
 - **7.5 Workshop 5:** Maximising the Fight Against Climate Change for Sustainable Development. Delegates proposed developing a certification system at the UN to monitor the extent to which projects are achieving their goals; NGOs should consider their own environmental impact; and recommended more youth participation in voluntary service as tool for education for sustainable development and in the fight against climate change.
 - **7.6 Workshop 6:** How can NGOs and Government Collaborate for Social Good? Attendees recommended creating a 'heat map' in ministries of development to identify needs; social entrepreneurship to accelerate the process of collaboration; and for a curriculum in universities to equip people to run non-profit organizations.

8. The UNESCO NGO Forum therefore makes the following recommendations:

- **8.1** Following the many debates and discussions held during the Forum, we note that the young delegates have shown themselves to be the change-makers, offering creative solutions to manifold challenges.
- **8.2** We call upon NGOs to scale up young people's initiatives locally, nationally and internationally, to integrate young people within all levels of their structures and accompany them in developing the key competences they need to maximize their active citizenship and social impact, particularly through non-formal and informal learning.
- **8.3** In order to build the capacity of NGOs in this regard, we further recommend more support from external stakeholders such as governments, intergovernmental organizations, businesses and individuals, including probono, management expertise, facilities, training schemes and funding.
- **8.4** We encourage the UNESCO Director-General to take these recommendations into consideration in the implementation of the programme budget for 2018-2021.

PICTURES OF IHRO PRESIDENT WITH DELEGATES DURIMNG THE UNESCO NGO FORUM

























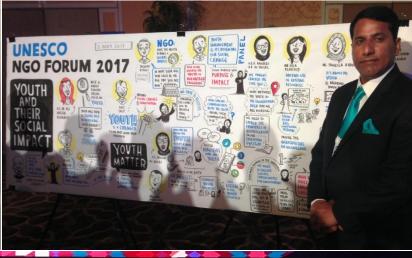














THANK YOU



REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

It was great honor and opportunity for me to participate in the UNESCO NGO Forum 2017 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on the invitation of the UNESCO and Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdul-Aziz MiSK Foundation. I, on behalf my organization "International Human Rights Observer" appreciate the vision and program of the MiSK foundation to host such an important and historical first ever International NGO forum in Saudi Arabia. The "Youth and Their Social Impact" was a best and great topic to discuss and engage youth for national building through their participation in different governmental and non-governmental programs.

This was a hugely positive Forum which broke new ground in several ways. The largest gathering of NGOs in Saudi history; unprecedented engagement on topics not often discussed (women's rights, sustainable education and access to education and equality) and a firm commitment from the Saudi government to broadening equal access for younger generations moving forward with the UN's 2030 Agenda, as well as their own National Transformation Agenda.

The Statement of Human Rights Watch just before event "UNESCO NGO Forum in Saudi Arabia is a Slap in the Face due to KSA record of human rights" was very alarming and rigid. After successful and meaningful forum in Riyadh, HRW statement has become foolish statement and idea due to more commitment of the Government of KAS for human rights and social development in the country. We need appreciation not only criticism in the name of Human Rights for the promotion and protection of Human Rights. IHRO appreciate to the Government of KSA and MiSK Foundation for taking right direction for the objective of women and other rights in the country.

It was also great world class event in which we met and learnt a lot from key personalities, speakers and experts like Mr. Jacques Attali, French economist, financier and philosopher, Mr. Jimmy Wales, Founder of Wikipedia, Mr. Justin Smith, CEO of Bloomberg Media Group, Mr. John Defterios, CNN journalist, Mr. Carl Lewis, athlete with nine gold and one silver medals from Olympics, Mr. Bader AlAsaker, MiSK Foundation Secretary General and many others.

We must thank the MiSK Foundation for their generosity in supporting the Forum and IHRO's attendance, and the people of Riyadh for making us feel so welcome. The organizing team at UNESCO, and the NGO Liaison Committee are also due thanks for their tireless efforts for this forum.

IHRO feel honor to write this short report just as a contribution to promote the vision, findings and scope of the UNESCO NGO Forum for the promotion of human rights, sustainable development, human dignity and equally opportunities for all the nations in the world without any discrimination .The report will be circulated everywhere through net and other source of information.

Dr Khalid Pervaiz Sulehri Founder President IHRO

CONGRATULATIONS

H.E MOHAMMAD BIN SALMAN BIN ABDULAZIZ AI SAUD CROWN PRINCE OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA & CHAIRMAN, THE MISK FOUNDATION

LEADER OF THE MUSLIM WORD



International Human Rights Observer (IHRO) Pakistan appreciates the wise young dynamic leader of the Muslim world **H.E Mohammad Bin salmon Bin Abdulaziz al Saud** due to his tireless efforts as a politician, philanthropist and committed reformer. IHRO congratulate him for becoming the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, First Deputy Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia and the youngest minister of defense in the world.

IHRO feel proud of him due to his vision of philanthropy and founder of "Mohammad bin Salman Bin Abdul Aziz MiSK Foundation which shows his new leadership required for the nation and Muslim Ummah according to the challenges of 21st Centenary.

The great agenda and activities of MiSK Foundation including empowering and enabling the younger generation, in line with Vision 2030's goals, knowledge-based economy and the National Strategy for Youth, which emphasizes the importance of supporting youths and promoting entrepreneurial, intellectual and physical abilities.

His remarks in his message enlighten a great future of KSA and other Nations

"MiSK and I, hand in hand, will seek to take actions, adopt initiatives and encourage creativity, ensuring their sustainability growth to contribute in developing the human mind.

We ask Allah to guide us in the path of giving back to society, realizing our leadership's vision, and faithfully serve our sons and daughters"

The successful 7th International UNESCO NGO FORUM from 3-4 May, 2017 in Riyadh , Saudi Arabia is also credibility of honorable Mohammad bin Salman Bin Abdul Aziz MiSK Foundation under his leadership and team. IHRO feel honor and proud to be participant of the Forum and offer its all kind of cooperation and services to promote the great agenda of MiSK foundation under the patronage of the H.E Mohammad bin Salman Bin Abdul Aziz in the Future.

Dr Khalid Pervaiz Sulehri Founder President IHRO www.ihro.org.pk