



*Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science
and
Applications in the Middle East*

**Address by Professor Khaled Toukan, Director of SESAME,
on the occasion of the "Soft" inauguration
of the SESAME Centre**

Allan, Jordan, 3 November 2008

Your Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Bin Muhammad and representative of His Majesty King Abdullah II,

Your Excellency Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO,

Your Excellencies Ministers of Education and Scientific Research and Planning,

Delegates of Members and Observers of SESAME,

Distinguished Guests,

It is a great honor for me to welcome you today at the ceremony of the “soft” inauguration of SESAME and the opening of this new building. SESAME has come a long way since the idea to establish a synchrotron light source in the Middle East was proposed by Herman Winick and Gustaf-Adolf Voss in 1997. In the following years, the idea was nurtured by Federico Mayor, Tord Ekelof, Sergio Fubini, and Herwig Schopper in meetings, seminars, and correspondence between UNESCO and its Member States. In 1999, an International Interim Council under the presidency of Herwig Schopper was formed and subsequently Jordan was selected to host the first synchrotron light source in the Middle East. With support and continuous help from Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, the ground-breaking ceremony took place in January 2003, just 6 years after the idea was first conceived. The great and unlimited support of His Majesty King Abdullah II and His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Bin Muhammad made it possible for Jordan to overcome, in a relatively short time, all hurdles, whether legislative, logistic or financial, and to complete construction of this building, assemble the microtron and start building the booster. In this regard, I would like to highlight the Royal Court’s contribution of US\$3 million towards procurement of equipment and building of a new storage ring for SESAME.

The Government of Jordan has responded by giving its utmost support to SESAME. The land on which the SESAME building is constructed has been given free of charge. The building itself, costing US\$10 million, has been constructed at the expense of the Government of Jordan. In

addition, a total of €1.25 million from the Jordan-EU bilateral programme has been allotted for SESAME to complete installation of the microtron. To date, this brings Jordan's total contribution to SESAME to US\$30 million. It is also worth noting that the SESAME Members' annual contribution to the recurrent budget has risen from US\$250,000 in 2003 to US\$1 million in 2008, and it is expected to rise gradually to reach US\$4 by the year 2013. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has contributed a total of US\$1 million over and above the legal and administrative support it provided, and is indeed still providing, for SESAME. The IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) has contributed US\$900,000 for training and building capacity of the scientific and technical staff of SESAME. Moreover, equipment and beamlines have been donated by synchrotron centres, namely BESSY (Berlin Electron Storage Ring Company for Synchrotron Radiation), Daresbury Laboratory, LURE (Laboratoire pour l'Utilisation du Rayonnement Electromagnétique) and SLAC (Stanford Linear Accelerator Center).

On this occasion I would like to express gratitude to the SESAME staff who have worked tirelessly over the past five years to bring SESAME to where it stands today. My particular thanks go to:

Professor Dieter Einfeld, Dr Gaetano Vignola and Dr Amor Nadji, the successive SESAME Technical Directors,

Professor Hany Helal and Professor Mohammed Yasser Khalil, the successive SESAME Administrative Directors,

Dr Islam Baig and Dr Hafeez Hoorani, the successive SESAME Scientific Directors, and also

Engineer Rafiq Sarraf, Mrs Sonia Al-Faques and Dr Yasser El-Shayeb the SESAME technical and administrative staff. To all those who have contributed to SESAME we are very grateful.

Countries, leaders, scientists, and engineers, who stand behind SESAME demonstrating their support and belief in peace and prosperity in the Middle East through the advancement of scientific research and the enhancement of collaboration between scientists in the region, will pave the way towards sustained development that will nurture the real seeds of peace and economic growth in the region. This is what the SESAME story is all about, to foster innovative research in physics, biology, materials science, and chemistry by scientists from the Middle East and the rest of the world for the benefit of the global community.

To this end, we are proud to announce that SESAME has solicited support and guidance from the most distinguished members of the international scientific community. Recently, a declaration in support of SESAME by 45 Nobel Laureates expressing satisfaction at the progress attained so far by SESAME and urging more support in order to bring the project to complete success has been issued.

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite the important milestones there have already been in the life of SESAME, major challenges are still being faced, among them securing a total of US\$16 million to upgrade the storage ring and make it functional by the year 2012. With the great progress SESAME has made to date, we are optimistic that these challenges will be overcome through the continued support of the good friends of SESAME.

Today we gather to inaugurate the SESAME building, and see our dreams come true. With your continued belief in peace and prosperity in the Middle East and support, we will meet again in a few years to inaugurate the commissioning of the first beamline and the start of scientific research work at SESAME.

Thank you all for coming to show your support for SESAME and I wish you a pleasant stay in Jordan.