



19th Annual Fertilizer Forum
Sharm Al Sheikh: Feb. 26th – 28th, 2013

Welcome Speech of
His Excellency Dr. Shafik Ashkar
AFA Secretary General

Sharm El-Sheikh: 26/02/2013



Your Excellency Khaled Fooda

Governor of South Sinai

AFA Board Members

Ms. Charlotte Hebebrand

Director General, IFA – France

Arab and International Companies' Chairmen

Ladies and Gentlemen ... Distinguished Attendants

With great pleasure, I welcome you all in the inauguration of the 19th Annual Fertilizer Forum, after being transferred to Sharm El-Sheikh. The convening of which was pressingly urged by AFA members and Board together with a number of international organizations, for being a key station where AFA member companies stand to elevate their policies and works. The Forum is thus considered a source of assistance and determination, providing an early insight into

fertilizer trade and industry situation in 2013 and the following years. All of the former issues were the most important motives for heading forward in this direction.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Our Forum, this year, is titled “Fertilizer ... Feeds the World”, as we all acknowledge the importance of fertilizer growing role in maximizing and boosting agricultural production; increasing the productivity revenue by not less than 40%.

- The world is witnessing unprecedented over-population rate accompanied by persistent increase in and diversification of food requirements, clearly manifested in some countries change of food structure, for example China and India, in accordance with related international organizations reports. Therefore, fertilizer industry bears more responsibility in order to go in harmony with such an increase in population rate and demand on food, as food security is closely related to the economic growth, social advancement and political stability.
- Consequently, international food security agenda should focus on sustainable agriculture and rural development issues through reinforcing agricultural productivity and rural economic growth; bearing in mind the fact that the world economy recovery from the international financial crisis is still weak.

Ladies and Gentlemen

- There is a dire need to direct additional efforts and innovative researches to fertilizers, underlining the necessity to intensify researchers efforts and agricultural research centers orientation so as to reach a new bundle of fertilizer products working on the enhancement of more food production, less squandering of resources besides preservation of both environment and human. New tools, such as Nano Technology and Bio-technology, eventually provide researchers with new opportunities; it is expected to result in a “new

generation” of fertilizer products and improve usage methods, thus reaching a more efficient usage, production increase and environment protection.

Ladies and Gentlemen

- Concerning the sessions of “Fertilizers ... Feed the World” Forum, the papers to be presented during the first two days sessions will focus on international fertilizer policies, fertilizer industry position, related raw materials, main consuming markets and future directions; all these issues will be tackled in depth and directly during the sessions.
- In relation to the third day, it will highlight the issue of fertilizer and human being. The need emerged to discuss the importance of micro-nutrients in agriculture and their impact on human health together with the effect of plant nutrients on fodder, animal health and food protein production in general. To illustrate, more than half of the world population are fed via food produced depending on fertilizers usage in addition to other inputs. However, there are many misconceptions related to the impacts of fertilizers on human health and confusion between pesticides and method and amounts of application.
- Therefore, the rational usage of fertilizer and thoughtful agricultural practices play a vital role not only in facing food security challenge but also in fostering the nutrient content and value of food crops; playing an effective role in promoting human health and welfare.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In a nutshell, the existing and actual reality is that fertilizer industry is and will remain the backbone of a pioneering strategic industry providing both food and clothes, the role of which will maximize a year after another.

I would like, in conclusion, to extend you all my deep gratitude for the generous auspices for such a Forum, the Arab Republic of Egypt government and bodies for the assistance provided to AFA works being the headquarters country, the Egyptian sponsoring companies for their

diligent sponsorship to our annual Forum and finally the international companies for their support to the Forum proceedings.

Best Regards

Dr. Shafik Ahskar

Secretary General

Sharm El- Sheikh: 26/02/2013