

CONFERENCE

The First Middle East Metrology Conference and Exhibition

Bahrain

6-8 May 2002

MAJEED AL GASSAB, Technical Committee Chairman



The Ministry of Commerce & Industry - Directorate of Standards and Consumer Protection - organized the First Middle East Metrology Conference and Exhibition from 6 to 8 May 2002 at the Gulf International Convention Centre, Gulf Hotel, Bahrain.

This article summarizes the Panel Discussions held on 8 May.

The Panel Discussion took place on 8 May 2002 at the GICC, Gulf Hotel. The members of the panel included:

- Dr. Stephen Carpenter
- Dr. Hidetaka Imai
- Dr. Eberhard Seiler
- Mr. Vivian Linacre
- Dr. Gerard Faber
- Col. Sameer A. Al Zayani

Col. Sameer opened the discussion by thanking the visiting speakers and delegates for their active participation in the Conference, and said that the Conference Committee was very proud to host this first event in Bahrain. He then invited the keynote speakers to express their comments and suggestions:

- Dr. Imai thanked the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and members of the Organizing Committee for their excellent organization of all the presentations. He added that this should encourage regional metrology laboratories to increase local awareness of laboratory services.
- Dr. Seiler emphasized that trade with partners around the world must employ systems that were in harmony with international trends, including certificates that were on a par with those used internationally; he praised the efforts made by Bahrain to be the first in initiating this move. He recommended that the region consider joining various international organizations in order to implement international recommendations, since it was easier to look towards neighboring countries to establish a system in a complimentary way. He again emphasized that it was of importance for the private sector to employ the services of local laboratories to both save money and use available resources, thus making Bahrain a focal point on the international scene.
- On behalf of the British Weights and Measures Association (BWMA) Mr. Vivian Linacre thanked the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Conference Committee for the opportunity to attend the event. He went on to voice two concerns and one recommendation:
 - ◆ He had observed that there was a lack of education among both the public and clients as to the potential of the science of metrology; he felt that many were unaware of the vast scope of this subject. It was an immense but necessary task to communicate more about this subject to the outside world in the future.
 - ◆ Secondly, he emphasized that the structures for the administration and pursuit of metrology between officials and regulators were very sophisticated. There was a lack of representation at the technical/practical level, as suggested earlier.
 - ◆ Finally, he recommended that Bahrain should lay the foundation stone for the *International Institute of Metrology* in order to instigate a future biennial conference on this subject. This Institute would not only be an organization to implement standards for the benefit of an organization but also as a general rule for all technicians and others to become direct members of this organization for the overall benefit of all those involved.
- Mr. Gerard Faber thanked the Committee and greatly appreciated the presentations made by the Keynote and other speakers, and made the following recommendations:
 - ◆ Start the preparations for the 2nd Metrology Conference as soon as possible.
 - ◆ Focus the next Conference on Middle East priorities, but in relation to other countries.
 - ◆ Publicize the next Conference widely, and ensure that there is sufficient awareness as to its outcome and the recommendations it makes, especially

ensuring that the latter are communicated to all government officials and to both the public and private sectors.

- ◆ Increase cooperation in the Middle East, and build up strong ties for the next Conference.
 - ◆ The Middle East countries must play an important role in global metrology.
 - ◆ The key decision makers should invest in metrology applications on a regional basis and utilize each other's capabilities rather than come up with stand-alone solutions.
- Dr. Stephen Carpenter praised the movement on metrology which had started in Bahrain, paving the way towards successful future Conferences. He emphasized the need for efforts to be incorporated regionally within each member state, since the latter have different needs and thus require expertise in regional areas.

He also supported the idea of a biennial Conference on Metrology and to encourage universities to send more students to attend the various presentations.

He encouraged the involvement of the technical vendors and companies dealing with metrology to participate in - and indeed set up - more workshops during the Conference and exchange new ideas and technology.

- Col. Sameer closed the session by thanking delegates for their participation and requested them to spread awareness of metrology so that more delegates could participate in future Conferences. He also mentioned that Mrs. Ghaïet-El-Mouna Annabi had recommended the implementation of a regional coordinating office (or regional coordinator) for the OIML to represent the Arab region. He then opened the floor for discussion and delegate questions.

Delegate questions

1. The benefit of being an OIML Member State or Corresponding Member

Mr. Faber replied briefly to this question by saying that in essence, a *Member State* has voting rights whereas a *Corresponding Member* does not. Whilst he regretted not having enough time to go into more detail, individual delegates were more than welcome to contact him for more detailed information. Based on this he once again encouraged regional representation at the OIML.

2 Conference publicity

Some delegates pointed out that there was a lack of publicity and asked the organizers to ensure maximum publicity for the next Conference, since a large number

of potential participants in Saudi Arabia working in metrology and its applications had received the information too late.

3 Regional Metrology Committee

A delegate from the United Arab Emirates suggested that the Technical Committees in GCC countries might assist in the Conference budget by forming a Regional Metrology Committee to address the immediate metrological requirements and needs and also future Conferences.

4 Technical papers

A delegate from Bahrain suggested that some of the technical papers could have been modified to provide more knowledge on how to ensure that metrology had the greatest impact and the highest degree of influence on industry.

5 Ways to improve measurement standards

Dr. Bruno Vaucher asked that the needs of the region in health and trade measurements be established, and also the possibility of calibration conformance measurements with the involvement of the customer in the process, using existing facilities in improving measurement standards.

6 Regional calibration laboratory services

Regional calibration laboratory services should be developed and promoted and an accreditation body established in the region, i.e. to identify a national calibration laboratory by identifying national and regional standards requirements.

To conclude, two recommendations for the future were voiced:

- Dr. Vaucher congratulated the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for organizing this *First Middle East Metrology Conference and Exhibition* and for giving the participants an insight into the different fields and aspects of metrology. His views and suggestions as to the next steps to be taken were:
 - ◆ To focus on the setting up regionally of a Metrology Institute/Organization with the necessary infrastructure in which Bahrain would be an important partner and could take over the leadership in cooperation and coordination activities (since technical competence is built up by laboratory work, skills and experience).
 - ◆ To begin by establishing the needs according to the existing or planned industrial production and available services, as well as according to the local

situation in trade, health services, environmental protection or other fields in which measurements are needed.

- ◆ To study the possibility of performing calibrations, testing and conformity assessment in order to serve the local needs faster and in a less expensive way than being dependent on geographically distant infrastructures, but also to consider carrying out these measurements for overseas customers and to participate in the "Testing business".
- ◆ To build up an accordingly decentralized but practical infrastructure calling on the advice and support of experts having the overview, technical experience and competence in the corresponding fields.

■ Dr. Seiler made some recommendations for the development of metrology in Bahrain:

- ◆ Set up a Metrology Committee under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry with representatives from the private sector, other Ministries (e.g. Health, The Environment and the Armed Forces) and to set up the task to initiate, supervise and follow-up on the necessary activities.
- ◆ Carry out a "Needs assessment" and a survey on existing metrology laboratories in the country.
- ◆ Draw up a master plan for the development of metrology.
- ◆ Increase contacts/coordination with GSMO and other National Metrology Institutes and Organizations across the world and make use of expert knowledge ■

Symposium Report

by Roberto Luiz de Lima Guimarães, INMETRO

INMETRO

International Meeting on Metrology and Quality

◆ Tools for Competitivity ◆

9-12 April 2002, Rio de Janeiro



Introduction

The International Meeting on Metrology and Quality was organized by Inmetro and was attended by 61 experts from 21 European and American countries, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The Symposium was opened by the Minister of Science and Technology and by the Head of Inmetro, Mr. Armando Mariante. The President of Brazil and the Minister of Development attended the official closing session. The President of Brazil delivered a very impressive speech on the role of Inmetro and the importance of Metrology and Quality for the sustained development of Brazil.

The Symposium was attended by some thousand participants, and 136 parallel sessions were organized on the following themes :

- a) Metrology
- b) TBT Agreement
- c) Conformity Assessment
- d) Accreditation

The Legal Metrology Seminar

The program of Legal Metrology shared a wide variety of information concerning three important sub-themes:

- Software applied to measuring;
- Ways of performing metrological control; and
- Measurement in custody transferance and legal measurement of petroleum products.

Conclusion

The meeting was an important forum for discussions on Metrology and Quality and represented a positive contribution to develop an integrated view on Metrology and Quality, fostering the cooperation between these two key issues in modern trade and industry. ■