The High Council of Moroccan American Medical and Biology Doctors (HC-MAMBD) Met His Excellency Mohamed Ameur, Minister in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad

By Abdelmajid Kassem

The High Council of Moroccan American Medical & Biology Doctors (HC-MAMBD; http://www.hc-mambd.org) met His Excellency Mohamed Ameur, Moroccan Minister Delegate in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad at New York University Medical Center, New York University, NY. The meeting took place Thursday October 1, 2009 from 5 to 7:30 pm. The Minister was accompanied by the Moroccan Council General in New York City Mr. Mohamed Karmoune and several guests.

The Minister and his guests were received by Drs. Allal Boutajangout and Abdelmajid Kassem (Council’s President and Vice President, respectively) who guided them through NYU Medical Center. The team visited the Laboratory of Physiology, Neuroscience, and Psychiatry and met the Lab head Dr. Einar Sigurdsson, an expert in Alzheimer’s disease, who assured the Minister that he is ready to accept Moroccan students to study towards their Masters and PhD degrees in his lab at NYU provided that they have their own scholarships and fellowships.

After a tour of the department, the team proceeded to the Simlow conference room 601A where other members of the council and guests were present. At the conference room, Dr. Thomas Wisniewski, Professor of Neurology, Psychiatry, and Neurosciences who is an expert in Alzheimer’s disease also welcomed the Minister and his guests as well as the members of the council to NYU Medical Center. Dr. Wisniewski also assured the Minister that he is also ready to accept several Moroccan students in his Lab at NYU.

After that, Dr. Boutajangout welcomed the Minister and presented the program of the meeting that started with a talk of the Minister Mohamed Ameur. The Minister congratulated the council for its work and dedication. He also mentioned his meetings with several Moroccan organizations in Canada and US which are all ready to contribute to the development of our beloved country Morocco. However, we all face several challenges among which are: What to do? And how to proceed? Therefore, we need real and tangible programs that will lead to tangible outcomes. The Minister also stated that Morocco is ready today more than before to work with all Moroccan competencies abroad. His Excellency also mentioned that many Moroccan companies and individuals already returned to their native country and contribute to its development but others can help from their adopted countries wherever they are. Another challenge facing the Moroccan government is how to cense Moroccan experts abroad, prepare databases of their expertise, organizations, and start programs between them and Morocco. The Minister then gave an example of Moroccan experts living in Germany and the programs they started with Morocco.
In his brief talk after the Minister, the Council General of the Kingdom of Morocco in NY thanked the Minister for his visit and the council for its efforts to help and contribute in the development and advancement of research, science, and education in Morocco.

The Council’s President, Dr. Allal Boutajangout, gave a brief history about the council, its foundation in June 2008, and presented its Board Members. Then he talked about the noble goals of the council which are to unite Moroccan Medical Doctors, Pharmacists, and Biologists (PhDs), tie collaborations between them here in the US, and between them and Moroccan institutions and individual researchers. Dr. Boutajangout also mentioned that the council is ready to accept Moroccan students and researchers in US institutions because most of its members are well established experts in their fields in US institutions. He also highlighted several activities of the council in Morocco and US since its creation. Dr. Boutajangout also mentioned the collaboration in progress between the council and the Moroccan CNRST. This collaboration was initiated by the council through the Minister’s (Mr. Mohamed Ameur) Cabinet.

After the President’s presentation, Prof. Mohamed Boutjdir talked about the secrets of success of nations among which he mentioned: (1) Strategic investments in revolutionary technologies that empower individuals, societies, and bring prosperity to nations, (2) Investment in scientific research and development (R&D) that lead to discoveries which enhance critical thinking, creates an economic motor, and lead to human prosperity. Prof. Boutjdir then gave the current state of the approximately 200 universities in the Arab World which have almost no ties to the industry and spend less than 1% of their budget in R&D compared to an average of 35% in the West. He also mentioned that in the Arab World, only 0.5% of the GDP is spent in R&D compared to 3% in Japan, 2.7% in US, and 1.9% in Europe (EU). Prof. Boutjdir then presented the council’s long term vision to (1) promote a long term economic development, (2) reinforce the capacities of infrastructure and management, (3) establish durable scientific collaborations between various Moroccan Governments departments, industries, and universities, (4) implement programs that will allow the participation of Moroccan scientists, engineers, and other experts living abroad, (5) establish partnerships between Moroccan institutions and institutions where Moroccans living abroad work, (6) establish virtual databases of all Moroccan experts living abroad with their expertise and creation of groups and subgroups depending on the expertise, and (7) identify the needs of Moroccan industries and academic institutions, etc.

Prof. My Abdelmajid Kassem then talked about the creation of KBM Scientific Publishing, LP (KBMSPLP; website coming soon: www.kbm-scientific-publishing.org) by three members of the council (Drs. Kassem, Boutajangout, and Meksem). KBM-SPLP is a partnership specialized in publishing high quality peer-reviewed online journals and books in most scientific fields(1). KBM-SPLP has currently 14 journals and the list is growing. Its Advisory Board and Editorial Boards of its journals are well known experts in their fields. Prof. Kassem also talked about the fact that the council launched its own scientific journal called KBM Journal of Biology which is hosted and published by KBM-SPLP and of which he (Dr. Kassem) serves as the Editor-In-Chief. KBM-SPLP invited several Moroccan scientists to participate in the Editorial Boards of its journals and is open to Moroccan scientists and scientists worldwide to publish the findings of their research investigations. Prof. Kassem stressed the fact that KBM-SPLP will certainly contribute to the advancement of science in Morocco (and the world) by increasing the number of publications by Moroccan scientists which is in decline according to a recent study published by Prof. Hamid Bouabid (Moroccan Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research) and collaborators in the journal Scientometrics(2).

A session of Q&A followed during which the Minister answered several questions asked by the council’s members. At the end, the Minister, the Council General, and guests were pleased with the council’s presentations, achievements, and wished the council success in its future activities.

The council’s meeting with the Minister was organized and scheduled by Mrs. Khadija Sansar, the Minister’s Administrative Assistant of Communication and Relations. Therefore, the council’s Board of Directors would like to express their...
gratitude to Mrs. Sansar for her efforts to schedule this meeting.

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(1) www.kbm-scientific-publishing.org

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