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## Algeria hosts international conference on micro- and nano-technologies

26/11/2006

Mouloud Mammeri University in Tizi-Ouzou recently hosted an international conference on micro and nano-technologies. The event attracted technology specialists from countries around the world.

By Kaci Racelma for Magharebia in Algiers—26/11/06



[File] Benfdila discusses nanotechnology at the conference.

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Tizi-Ouzou, the capital of Greater Kabylia, hosted the 2006 International Conference on Micro- and Nano-technologies between November 19th and 23rd. It was organised by Mouloud Mammeri University in Tizi-Ouzou, in collaboration with the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, Italy, and the Institute of Micro-electronics, Electromagnetism and Photonics (IMEP) in Grenoble, France.

The conference provided an opportunity for researchers from around the globe to present and discuss recent research and advances in the fields of micro- and nano-technology.

"Thirty nations from four continents honoured this international conference with their presence, and I must say I'm delighted," conference Chairman Arezki Benfdila. The Mouloud Mammeri University Professor said that the objective of this conference is "technology and information transfer between the countries of the developed North to the South".

"[The aim is] setting up an individual and collective co-operation environment between researchers from both shores, in order to foster this initiative on the spot," he said.

Micro- and nano-technology are the mechanisms by which the smallest technological structures are created.

Micro-technology came about in the 1960s, and was used to manufacture miniaturized electronic devices in a wide range of products such as computers, communication devices, blood pressure monitors and automobile airbags. The more recent nano-technology uses the smaller nanostructures and nano-material, and cuts across many disciplines, including applied physics, medicine, biotechnologies as well as mechanical and electrical engineering.

Medical, biotechnological and even mechanical technologies are all turning to nano-technology. Electronic components are gradually being replaced by the more efficient nanotubes. So-called microfluidic microchannels and fluidic circulation have been designed to open up new horizons for medicine, biology, pharmaceuticals, agronomy, advanced microelectronics, and micro air-conditioning for mechanical, electronic and biological systems.

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By hosting this conference, Algerian officials hope to bring the country in line with major countries developing such technologies for use in their industries. Algeria has a wealth of natural resources, as well as human potential, which work in favour of this major oil-exporting country.

"The huge numbers of research staff coming to Algeria, and more precisely to Kabylia, will allow our country to climb back into the saddle and turn its back on the years of diplomatic isolation arising from the black decade," noted Mohamed Habet, a journalist covering the event for Algerian Radio 1.

Organizers hope that Algeria can contribute to the improvement of living standards through spreading scientific knowledge in Africa and its participation in the training of university staff.

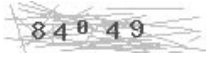
The participants included Gérard Ghibaudo from IMEP, Surya Raghu from Advanced Fluidics LLC in Maryland, and ICTP Director Professor Kattepal Sreenivasan.

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