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# Summer Davos in Asia Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2012 Creating the Future Economy

Tianjin, People's Republic of China 11–13 September

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## **Report on Young Scientist Program in Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2012**

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<http://www.emwis.net/topics/ways/AMNC12-GYA>

The Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2012 was held September 11-13, 2012 in Tianjin, People's Republic of China. It convened well over 2,000 stakeholders from more than 90 countries. A total of 34 young scientists from 18 countries participated in AMNC, among them 5 members from the Global Young Academy (GYA):

- ❖ Dr. Xingsheng Liu
- ❖ Dr. Sherien Ali Abdalla Elagroudy
- ❖ Dr. Sameh Hamdy Soror
- ❖ Dr. Jauad El Kharraz
- ❖ Dr. Aftab Ahmad Chattha

The theme of the meeting was “Creating the Future Economy”. This short report reflects my participation in the activities of the Young Scientist program of that annual meeting.

I was very happy attending such event, because firstly of the audience and the quality of participants and their multi-disciplinary backgrounds: stakeholders, decision makers, economists, governmental representatives (ministers, etc), finance world experts, young entrepreneurs, young shapers, and young scientists, etc. Those people belong to different communities of the World Economic Forum (AlphaTech, Repowering Transport Project, Capital Markets Climate Initiative, Risk Response Network, CEO Ambassador Group on Climate Change, Schwab Foundation Social Entrepreneurs, Chemicals Industries Steering Council, Social Investment Taskforce, Collaborative

Innovation – Biorefineries, Technology Pioneers, Consumer Industry, Technology Pioneers 2013, Engagement Technologies Team, The Dynamic Duo, Family & Private Companies, The Forum Water Initiative, Forum Staff, YGL Advisory Group, G20 Task Force: Green Growth, YGL Power Dads, Global Shapers Community, Young Global Leaders, New Vision for Agriculture, Young Scientists 2012).

Since my arrival the first day to the registration task, I had to give 4 interviews to 4 Chinese media, among them:

Isabel Hu, Reporter from China Tianjin TV

Zhang Xin, Journalist from China Central Television (CCTV)

Li Li, Reporter from China Radio International (Arabic Service)

I had to talk about the current financial & economic crisis in the world, the role of the Chinese economy and the perspectives from a European citizen point of view, as well as the solutions that I can propose or suggest as Young Scientist and member of the Global Young Academy (GYA). It was a good occasion to mention the GYA in those media, and some participants told me they saw me in the China Television the following day responding to those reporters' questions. I had to give an expectation on the China economic growth, which I expected to decrease as far as the crisis in Europe increase, as Europe is one of the big importers of Chinese products, but that Chinese economic growth will be relaunched again once the situation in Europe improves. I explained that Science and Technology are critical inputs for economic growth and poverty alleviation. Advances in scientific and technological knowledge as well as innovation made possible the significant reductions of poverty and improvements in the quality of life in both developed and developing countries throughout the 20th century, and this will continue as the ability of countries to access, comprehend, select, adapt, and use scientific and technological knowledge will increasingly be the determinant of material well-being and quality of life. Hence, I reclaimed more role for scientists and especially the new generation of young scientists who are called and have the capacity to bring innovative solutions to the most complex problems of the economy, the environment and the society of the 21st century.

On the other hand, I had got the occasion to interact with the other young scientists present in that conference, among them young scientists from: Turkey, Canada, South Korea, China, Japan, Egypt, Pakistan, United Kingdom, Ghana, US, Mexico, Chili, UAE, Switzerland, Spain, France, Morocco, Italy, South Africa, Malaysia, Benin. They come from diversified backgrounds: Chemistry, Environment, Biotechnology, Nuclear physics, Physics, nanotechnology, health sciences, computer sciences, ecology, electrical & electronics engineering, political sciences, automation, remote sensing, agriculture, etc.

This meeting is very inspiring thanks to the richness of the participants' knowledge and the diversified programme, with thematic sessions, and very interactive sessions such as: IdeasLab sessions.

Definitely, this meeting opened to me other perspectives, other approaches. As scientists, sometimes we keep a distance between us and the world of industry and business. But I realized

that it is very interesting to build a bridge and cut this distance if we want to see theory applied, if we want to make more beneficial our science and our theories, and obviously the potential financial means that can fund our research may be a result of such bridges building. I am looking forward to reinforce my links to the economic and industry worlds in the near future, and I am very satisfied about that experience in Tianjin.

In regards of the AMNC program, its organization overall was impressive, with meticulous attention to detail, and the same was true for the Young Scientists program specifically. For example, the sessions Young Scientists participated in were very well organized, as were the tours and evening parties on the last day. However, the communication of information about the Young Scientist program before and in the course of AMNC can be improved. The goals and expectations of WEF for the Young Scientists were not clearly articulated, sometimes contradictory, and information was sent to Young Scientists through different channels (sometimes email, from shifting contact persons, sometimes oral announcements, which not everyone received) creating confusion. This could be improved with a clearly designated contact person from the WEF and one or several mentors that would establish communications before the AMNC meeting along with an earlier establishment of an online community for Young Scientists already (so Young Scientists, for example, have access to a list of all participants before the meeting starts), and better mentoring during AMNC. Some of the questions about the nature of WEF and the goals and expectations for the Young Scientists program were discussed and clarified in the evening meeting on Sept. 11, organized by Dr. Alper and returning Young Scientist Xingsheng Liu. The meeting was perceived as very beneficial to me and the other Young Scientists more so than the typical meetings within our disciplines that we attend regularly. There was strong desire for collaboration among Young Scientists as well as between Young Scientists and the private sector, governments, associations, etc. The close interactions within and among these communities that WEF enabled were invaluable and truly unique. The Young Scientists program clearly fosters WEF's mission of "Improving the State of the World;" it also furthers the careers and broadens the horizons of Young Scientists by facilitating close and meaningful interactions with other communities, which do not arise as easily in any other setting we know.

In addition to the regular AMNC program, I participated in several private events:

- 1) Young Scientists Welcome Reception and Dinner (hosted by the Tianjin Municipal Government, 18:30-20:00 on Sept. 10, 2012): About a half of the Young Scientists attended the reception.
- 2) Meeting with Dr. Wan Gang, Minister of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China (07:30-08:45 on Sept 12, 2012). Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Board Member of World Economic Forum USA Foundation, served as a panelist for the program. Dr. Howard Alper, Chair and President of Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Canada moderated the program. The program went very well and was well received by the Young Scientists. After the program, Dr. Jackson and Dr. Alper continued informal discussions with us.
- 3) Informal group meeting the night of Sept. 11, where Dr. Alper and Xingsheng Liu introduced the history of the young scientists program, and gave place to interesting discussions on the importance of the young scientist program in the WEF, and how to make our presence more

visible and efficient in the current meeting and in the next ones.

- 4) From Minds to Markets (cross-community workshop, 14:15-15:45 on Sept. 13, 2012). The communities of Young Scientists, Technology Pioneers, Social Entrepreneurs, Global Growth Companies, and Young Global Leaders attended the workshop. (Name) Editor of Scientific American moderated the session. The program also went well. Many Young Scientists appreciated the close connection to entrepreneurs and others how are closer to markets. The discussions were perceived as stimulating and interesting—so much so that the general feeling was that it would have been good to have more time for the discussions.
- 5) Meeting (mainly Q&A session) with Prof. Philip Campbell, Editor-in-Chief of Nature magazine (evening of Sept. 13, Crystal Palace Hotel lobby). The meeting lasted about two hours. It was very interactive, with a lively back-and-forth between the Young Scientists and Dr. Campbell on the publication process and philosophy of Nature, on general trends in publishing in STEM fields, and today's challenges faced by young scientists. The meeting was very useful and beneficial to the Young Scientists.
- 6) Tianjin City Tour and Closing Dinner (hosted by the Tianjin Municipal Government, 13:30-20:00 on Sept. 14, 2012). Each Young Scientist was assigned to one of two tour routes. The tours were very beneficial to the Young Scientists. During the tours, there were seminars at Tianjin Polytechnic University and Tianjin University of Finance and Economics for route 1 and 2, respectively. Young Scientist David Juncker (McGill University, Canada) gave a presentation on how to use antibody microarrays and microfluidics in biomedical diagnostics and global health at Tianjin Polytechnic University. Young Scientist Jerome Amir Singh (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa) gave a presentation on “Scientific and Technological Enterprises: ethical, social, cultural, and legal implications”. The seminars were very impressive and highly recognized by the audience. The closing dinner party was lavish with impressive artistic performances. Though more interaction with the faculty, students, and alumni of the Tianjin universities that were in attendance would have been appreciated, it was a beautiful end to our time at AMNC

Some of the aforementioned ideas come from the report we prepared together –the young scientists community- and the most important suggestions that I shared was about the desire to have more sessions like “From Minds to Markets” in future similar event, which link different communities, with sufficient time allocated for such sessions to enable in-depth discussions. Moreover, the communication about the AMNC and its programme should be improved, and I suggest that the GYA plays a role in that regard, through coordinating the programme of the young scientists' community (YSC) before and during the event, so we will get out more benefit and exchange with the other communities and within our own community. In addition, the YSC should do more lobbying to make the community more visible in the programme of next events.

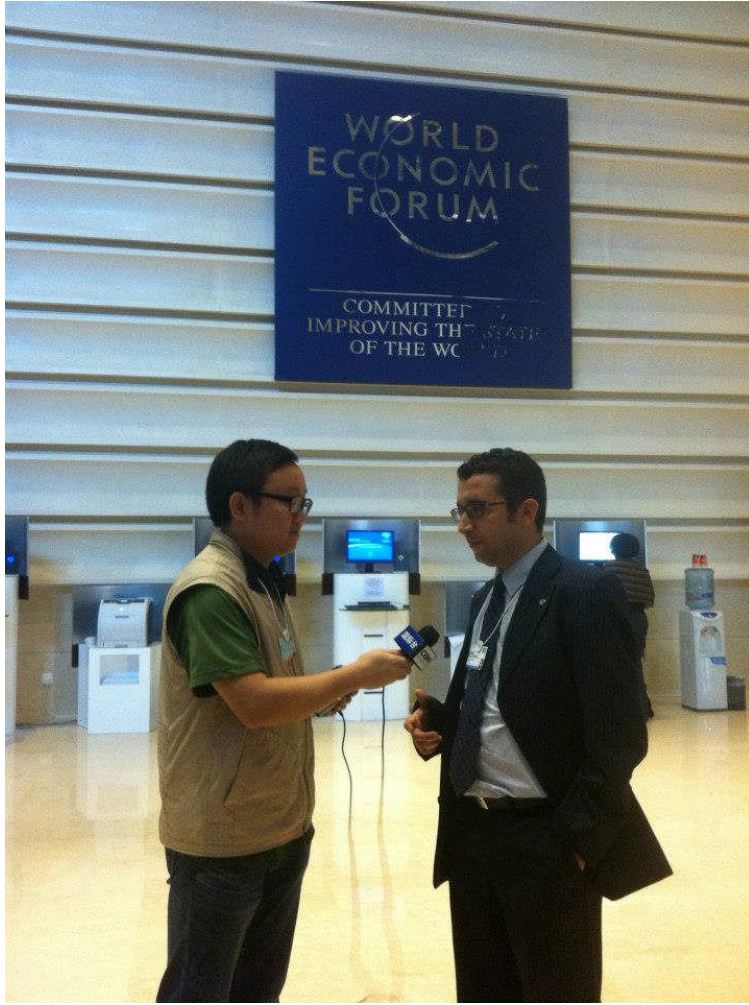


With Dr. Philip Campbell is Editor-in-Chief of Nature and of the Nature Publishing Group





with Merieme Chadid (born October 11, 1969) is a Moroccan astronomer and researcher at Dome C, Concordia Research Station in Antarctica. She is considered the first astronomer in the world to have been committed to install a large astronomical observatory in Antarctica



With Li Li, Reporter from China Radio International (Arabic Service)





Young scientists community after the meeting with Dr. Wan Gang, Minister of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China. Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Board Member of World Economic Forum USA Foundation, and Dr. Howard Alper, Chair and President of Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Canada



