

# Old Dominion University-Israel Science Conference

March 5 - 7, 1990

## INTRODUCTION

Joseph C. Daniel, Jr.  
Dean, College of Sciences  
Old Dominion University  
Norfolk, VA 23529-0163

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Old Dominion University-Israel Science Conference. The convening of this conference signals the recognition that both groups of scientists subscribe to the conviction of mutual dependence and the value of regular communication in the pursuit of scientific knowledge.

The objective of this meeting is to bring scholars together to share information, to interact professionally and to overcome any type of physical, political or cultural isolation that may impede that process. In addition to informal interaction, the meeting is expected to promote formal cooperation agreements leading to research collaboration, student training, faculty exchanges, and shared use of special facilities and resources. It can also foster more extensive conferences in the future and link scientists with policy makers, funding agencies and professional organizations that share their goals. Of no less importance is the nurturing of friendship between individuals and between countries.

Any two countries may experience impediments to communication because of differences in language, culture, ideology or even geographic location. The common language of science, with its established methods of logic, dependence on universal natural laws, and application potential, can be a powerful force in overcoming such impediments.

As one of Virginia's institutions of higher learning, Old Dominion University has established a high priority in regard to its international involvements. It seeks to expand its global interaction in every possible way as it matures rapidly into a major, sophisticated, world-visioned university.

The history of this conference dates back to the summer of 1988 when the Virginia-Israel Commission sent a delegation of science representatives, under the leadership of Dr. Gordon Davies, Director of the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia, to Israel to become informed about the major science initiatives there and to explore possibilities for interaction. Among the results of that visit was the proposal to conduct periodic symposia on topics of mutual interest to Virginian and Israeli scientists. The first of these was held in Israel in November of 1989 as a workshop on Water Resources Research.

Upon receiving the report of the science delegation, Dr. Sanford Lefcoe, a member of the Virginia Commission from the southeastern region of the state, along with Robert Gast, Harold Saks and later Gary Rubin of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater, encouraged officials at Old Dominion University to

develop similar conferences of a more local focus. They foresaw the value of such symposia to discuss topics that represented scientific disciplines where good communications and collaborations already existed, or were highly desirable, and potentially applicable to this region. This one on which we now embark is the result of their vision and we anticipate that it will set the standard and format for others to come that will expand the concept to include many different countries and highly diverse topics.

Through their solicitation, funding for this conference has been provided by the Virginia-Israel Commission, the Tidewater Jewish Foundation of the United Jewish Federation, the American Friends of Tel Aviv University and from Old Dominion University through the Office of Research and Graduate Studies of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Conference emphasizes two topics, Vector Borne Rickettsial Diseases on Monday and Organizational Adaptation to Older Workers on Wednesday. For the intervening Tuesday, the plenary session will be held, with special addresses from Dr. Meier Yogev, Science Consul of the Israel Embassy and Dr. David Johnson, Executive Director, Federation of Behavioral, Psychological and Cognitive Sciences. The Conference Luncheon-Banquet will also be held on Tuesday with special tours planned in the afternoon for ODU research laboratories, the National Aeronautical and Space Administration facilities and Williamsburg Colonial Park.

Special appreciation is expressed to Mr. William Spong, President, and Dr. Myron Henry, Vice President for Academic Affairs at Old Dominion University, for their encouraging support, Drs. Albert Glickman and Daniel Sonenshine for organizing and chairing the two major sessions and to Professor Thomas Dunham and Ms. Gail Stenberg for arranging and managing the conference.

Almost three hundred years ago John Donne told us that "No man is an island." This conference is expected to substantiate this truth as we exercise our mutual dependence in our pursuit of wisdom.

Thank you.