



**International Year of Light celebrates impacts on scientific research**  
[www.light2015.org](http://www.light2015.org)

The United Nations' International Year of Light (IYL 2015) was launched in the City of Light (Paris, France) on January 19. France Córdova, Director of the US National Science Foundation (NSF), participated in a session on "The International Community of Light and Light-based Technology," where she said, "Light has been and will continue to be a compelling field of basic research and education crossing many disciplinary boundaries. In today's global economy, we believe it is important to nurture a scientific and

engineering workforce capable of successfully performing in an international research environment."

NSF has a long history of supporting research in optics and photonics as well as projects that use them as research tools. Among the agency's research emphases are a new photonic electronics platform paradigm; extreme UV and x-ray sources that represent new frontiers in research; science and engineering in the quantum realm; biophotonics, which sits at the crossroads of photonics and biology, offering potential innovation for

health care and medicine; and manufacturing innovations.

According to a news report from SPIE, one of the founding partners of IYL 2015, South African Minister of Science and Technology Naledi Pandor spoke during a session on science policy, pointing out that Africa is often excluded from international initiatives. She said that the countries of Africa need to develop a well-crafted science policy and provide academic freedom and the infrastructure for their researchers. According to the SPIE report, other panelists included Ana María Cetto of the National University of Mexico and Maciej Nalecz, UNESCO Director of the Division of Science Policy and Capacity-Building.

**Agreement signed to establish innovation complex in Egypt**  
[www.mcit.gov.eg](http://www.mcit.gov.eg)

Last Fall, Egypt's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and the Ministry of Scientific Research signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish an innovation and an e-industry complex at Maadi Technology Park. The MoU comes in the framework of Egypt's national strategy for the electronics industry.

This strategy aims at supporting electronics manufacturing services, systems

industry, and the design and development of the integrated-circuits industry. This is in addition to creating 50 companies in the field of microelectronic and integrated systems, as well as establishing technology centers of excellence to support small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The MoU is in line with the government trend of linking industry to scientific research in the IT field. The complex is to provide scientific, research,

marketing, and investment tools to support innovation and entrepreneurship for youth and SMEs, especially in the field of electronics and nanotechnology and its applications in information and communications technology and other fields.

Cairo University and the National Service Projects Organization of the Armed Forces are also participants in this agreement. Cairo University is to transfer all activities of the Egypt Nanotechnology Center to the complex, in addition to providing human resources, the technical expertise necessary for research and development work, and programs of study and specialized training. □



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