

An Introductory Talk:

BioVision Alexandria 2004 on

The New Life Sciences: Ethics, Patents & the Poor

Ladies and gentleman

I wish to start my talk by extending to all the most respectful salutation to this assembly, wishing participants & panelists the very best.

I also want to greet my colleagues on the rostrum

Respect & congratulations are due to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, its leaders & members of the Board of Trustees, expressing the honor bestowed upon me expecting your offer to chair the Arab Ethic Board.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In this introductory talk, I'd like to express my thoughts regarding the selected topic of this meeting. Stressing the meaning of discussing the joint new approach to life science whether soft or hard:

1. A rapid glimpse verifies the fact that hard sciences have overstepped the development of soft fields by many decades. The concern, for example, with the science of ethics & the ethics of science, other related fields were forgotten for decades & were revived only after World War II few years ago. World Medical associations started its concern in the Helsinki Declaration in the forties of the 20th Century while the World Health Organization showed its deep concern only recently in the 21st century.

2. Early in the 1st half of the 20th century, a great economist Shoemaker stated in his book, "Small is beautiful", that life is so precious to be left to scientists, engineers & economists. In his thesis he stressed that, if life was left to them alone without wisdom, morality of ethics, it could have disappeared soon after the industrial revolution.
3. It is true that science & technology are very beneficial to man to mention, but also caused a lot of damage inflicted through disastrous nuclear, guided missiles, blinding laser beams & inventing in labs the killing biological organisms, lethal chemical gases.

The creating geniuses after these inventions regretted their efforts after perceiving the damage inflicted to human being & their property. This is well illustrated in the words of Albert Einstein who "cursed the day" of his invention after bombing Hiroshima & Nagasaki. The pilot who carries the bombs to its largest place committed suicide, where his human coersions discovered the most unethical damage to hundreds & thousands in few seconds .

4. From this preamble one can conclude that any move in life showed stress the meaning of wisdom, which can only be reached through morals against elements of decay & deterioration induced in life by hatred & aggression. Thus, the science of ethics & bio-ethics can be summarized to be the disciplined study of morality, human reaction & deeds. These fall under the influence of deeply rooted cultures, the ever expanding knowledge & above all, the sacred influence of religions.
5. Throughout history, science was based on the K.A.A trial (knowledge, attitude and practice), all interwoven in a matrix of morality & fundamental ethics. This mobility governs all relations

between men & nations, through a group of laws & principles that keep life going on. Here, I quote the words of Federico Mayor in his thesis on "Ethics of life". He said "The role of physiology "The science of life as a science must be carved out of its relationships, to be changed from the genome & molecular biology to the modern evolutionary biology & its relation to ethics & environment.

6. To end this introductory talk, a capacity building system for ethics should be created, and not be left in the hands of amateurs alone. From different professions & responsibilities in life, a battalion of specialized, educated & trained ethicists should be developed as, a critical mass of professional experts to guard against overshooting in the progress of research & inventions in fields that can be disastrous to life or to human beings. This makes the protective barrier against human error & aggression.