

Welcome speech of acad. Gheorghe Duca, President of ASM at
the meeting with H.E. Asif J. Chaudhry,
Ambassador of USA in Moldova

First of all, Excellency, I would like to express my gratitude for accepting the visit to the Academy of Sciences of Moldova in these busy days. We were very sorry finding out that You felt sick on July 28 and here I would mention the fact that our climate and ecological products are very good for health, increasing the immunity.

The goal of our meeting is not only to present You some examples of successful moldavian - american scientific cooperation, but also to identify more possibilities for extending it.

In 2000, when we signed the Agreement of cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and CRDF Foundation, a real collaborative activity started. The total amount of US financial contribution was 8 million US dollars, and 2500 scientists took part in grant programs. Until now more than 300 projects were realized by joint scientific groups, around 200 moldovan scientists undertook research in American labs, was bought scientific equipment of more than two million US dollars, some of it You will see today, and 250 scientists working for military sphere were converted to civilian research.

During all these years we benefit both of important financial means and very valuable expertise. When the situation in our science was according to the famous question *To be or not to be*, the success of bilateral cooperation served us as a model for the reform of science sphere in Moldova. Based on US assistance we created the system of innovation and technology transfer, academic educational cluster, the legal framework for the renewable energy usage and many others.

In the recent years, with the outstanding efforts of CRDF and National Science Foundation we organized in Chisinau two very important international conferences for policy makers and scientists –*Global Science and National Policies: the role of Academies* in 2007 and *Science and Education Policies* in 2008. During my last visit in USA I discussed with National Science Foundation, CRDF and National Academies the possibility to organize next year another conference on *the role of Innovation for economic growth*.

I can mention also that the joint activity with American research community helped us to promote within our country the principles of a

knowledge based society and innovational economy. Here I can mention recently established relations with Tillman Business School from North Caroline.

All these said proves that the cooperation between Moldovan and American research communities proves to be a real success story bringing a mutual benefit for both countries.

I would like to mention at the end the outstanding saying of President OBAMA made in a speech during the Annual Meeting of the National Academy of Sciences: "Science is more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment, and our quality of life than it has ever been," the President said.

This quotation was met with a great enthusiasm by the researchers from all around the world, because it points out the main findings that should be understood by the humanity today. We hope that all the politicians will follow President OBAMA recognizing the importance of science and technology for future development.

Now I purpose to hear some more information on CRDF/MRDA activity, grant programs and on concrete project's results obtained within different programs. After that I invite you to visit our Lyceum for gifted children and the Academic University, which are situated in this area.