



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY AND CONGRESS

CENTER BRINGING LEADING SCIENTISTS TO SYRIA FOR DIALOGUE ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

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With the new opportunities for better relations with Syria, the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress (CSPC) announced today that its delegation of high-level science, higher education and health experts, including a Nobel Laureate, have arrived in Damascus. The Center's team will meet with counterparts at the University of Damascus to build scientific networks and identify areas for potential collaboration.

Pamela Scholl, Chairman of the Dr. Scholl Foundation and a member of the Center's Board of Trustees, is leading the trip. "We hope that this effort to build non-governmental links between the U.S. and Syria will increase scientific understanding between Americans and Syrians and, in time, lead to a renewed emphasis on finding solutions to the problems in the Middle East," Ms. Scholl said. Other delegation members include:

- **David Baltimore, Ph.D.**, Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine 1975 and Immediate Past Chair of the Board, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS);
- **The Honorable Theodore Kattouf**, former Ambassador to Syria (2001-2003) and the United Arab Emirates (1998-2001) and currently President, Amideast;
- **Maxmillian Angerholzer**, Executive Director, Richard Lounsbery Foundation;
- **John Boright, Ph.D.**, Executive Director for International Affairs, The U.S. National Academies;
- **Norman P. Neureiter, Ph.D.**, Director, Center for Science, Technology and Security Policy, AAAS;
- **Matthew Purushotham**, Project Director, U.S.-Syrian Science and Health Exchange, CSPC;
- **Vaughan Turekian, Ph.D.**, Chief International Officer and Director, Center for Science Diplomacy, AAAS; and
- **John C. Vaughn, Ph.D.**, Executive Vice President, Association of American Universities.

The delegation is sponsored by Mr. Wafic Saïd, a Syrian-Canadian businessman and philanthropist residing in England and a major donor to the Saïd Oxford University Business School.

The Center's President, David M. Abshire, former U.S. Ambassador to NATO, said "Now more than ever it is important to reach across national boundaries and identify the issues that unite us. I applaud Secretary Clinton's call for new initiatives to advance the cause of peace throughout the region, and our exchange may help that effort." This exchange was conceived in fall 2008 during discussions among Ambassador Abshire, Mr. Saïd and Hrant Semerjian, M.D., a prominent Washington physician. It utilizes a model of international relationship building through science, education and health exchanges, as demonstrated by previous efforts by the National Academies.

The Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress is a non-profit, non-partisan 501(c)3 organization that seeks to further the understanding and functioning of the American Presidency and its related institutions and, thereby, to educate, illuminate, and inspire leaders of tomorrow. More information about the organization can be found at www.thePresidency.org.

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