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The Arab Society for Forensic Sciences and Forensic Medicine (ASFSFM): Bringing together regional and international expertise

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Introductory Article

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) is dedicated to the advancement and dissemination of academic and professional excellence across all disciplines of security sciences in the Arab world. The University has made great advances in the successful development and refinement of the knowledge and skills of Arab security personnel in these disciplines – and most importantly in the field of forensic sciences.

As part of the University's responsibility to improve the academic and professional capabilities of Arab security personnel, and under the leadership of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, the Interior Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Honorary President of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers and the President of the Supreme Council at the University, the Arab Society for Forensic Sciences and Forensic Medicine (ASFSFM) was established.

The Society unites the efforts and expertise of

related security sectors and personnel to keep pace with the latest developments in forensic science and forensic medicine, and to deal with present-day challenges and future requirements in this vital field. The ASFSFM is a society which supports the different specializations of forensic sciences and forensic medicine, contributing to the advancement of research and training in these fields, and enabling Arab forensic experts to excel by providing them with the ideal platform for regional and international cooperation in their specializations.

It aims to become a leading society and to form a body of Arab world experts in forensic science and forensic medicine who will lead successful collective academic work in these fields. The Society works towards unifying and improving the standards of forensic science practice and research in the Arab world and holds conferences, symposiums, and workshops to facilitate the spread of knowledge and skills, both regionally and internationally.

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Production and hosting by NAUSS

History of the Society

The credit of establishing the ASFSFM goes to His Royal Highness the late Prince Naif bin Abdul Aziz (may Allah shower his mercy upon him), the former Crown Prince and Minister of Interior, and President of the Supreme Council at NAUSS, who always thought of a professional-academic body which could serve as a platform for Arab security scientists and specialists to share their knowledge, experiences and academic achievements at both regional

and international levels.

In November 2007, NAUSS organized and hosted The First International Forensic Science and Forensic Medicine Conference in Riyadh – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The scientific committee of the conference secured the endorsements and recommendations of the participants to form the Society and submitted them to the President of Naif Arab University for Security Sciences. In 2008, His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin Abdul Aziz (May Allah have mercy upon him) chaired the meeting of the Supreme Council of Naif Arab University for Security Sciences and granted the approval for the formation of the ASFSPM. His Royal Highness also pledged full support to establish and promote this society.

On June 4th 2013, the Society had the honor to be officially launched by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdul Aziz, the Interior Minister, Honorary President of the Council of Arab Ministers of Interior and Chairman of the Supreme Council of NAUSS. As per the endorsements and recommendations of the participants of the 2007 Forensic Science Conference, the ASFSPM is based at the College of Forensic Sciences at NAUSS. Society members include specialists, experts and students in forensic sciences and forensic medicine in the public and private sectors, as well as academics and relevant practitioners from all over the world.

The Society is very optimistic that under the sincere guidance and wise leadership of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdul Aziz, the ASFSPM will flourish and emerge as a prestigious scientific organization of regional and international repute.

Vision

To play a leading role in developing a high standard of excellence in forensic science and forensic medicine in the Arab world.

Mission

The ASFSPM aims to establish a scientific platform for forensic scientists, medicolegal experts, academics, classified professionals and students to simultaneously communicate, collaborate and lead a joint scientific effort to improve the quality of forensic science education, research and practice in the world.

ASFSPM Objectives

The ASFSPM strives to achieve the following objectives:

- Forming a distinct merge of all scientific and intellectual concepts and similarities among members of the Society.
- Sharing knowledge, professional skills and achievements in various disciplines of forensic sciences among forensic scientists from Arab countries as well as the rest of the world through academic and professional activities (meetings, conferences, symposiums and workshops).
- Offering academic and professional assistance to institutes, colleges, universities, law enforcement/planning agencies and other professional bodies to develop and improve programs and curricula related to forensic sciences, forensic medicine and security.
- Inspiring and supporting basic, applied and problem-oriented scientific research in various fields of forensic sciences.
- Encouraging and promoting the use of a standardized methodology for forensic investigations among member organizations and institutions through the implementation of uniform policies and procedures, the accreditation of forensic science laboratories, and the certification of regional forensic science practitioners.
- Enhancing and constantly developing procedures and techniques surrounding forensic science and improving the professionalism of scientists operating in the field of forensic sciences across the Arab world.
- Publishing the Arab Journal for Forensic Sciences and Forensic Medicine that comprises of topics and subjects reflecting different areas of forensic science and medicine, and releasing a bulletin on a quarterly basis for on-time delivery of scientific information and achievements.
- Encouraging the compilation, integration and sharing of scientific information and statistical data of forensic importance (DNA, Fingerprints, and Biometrics) in various fields of forensic sciences among member organizations and institutions.
- Recognizing the scientific accomplishments and achievements of Arab forensic scientists through Appreciation and Recognition Awards.
- Fostering friendship and cooperation among forensic scientists, institutions and forensic science associations both at regional and international levels.

Society Headquarters

NAUSS has generously provided the Society's office



along with full technical and moral support. Therefore, the ASFSFM headquarters is based in Riyadh, (KSA):
Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS)
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ASFSFM Membership

The ASFSFM offers membership under the following three different categories:

Full Membership:

This type of membership can be acquired by those who have a postgraduate or higher qualification in a relevant field from a recognized university. Alternatively, applicants having a Bachelor's degree may also be granted Full Membership provided they have testified experience in related areas for a period of no less than five years. The Full Membership fee is 150 Saudi Riyals (40 US Dollars) per year.

Associate Membership

This type of membership is available to university graduates working in the fields of forensic science or forensic medicine who do not qualify for the Full Membership. Alternatively, applicants with undergraduate qualifications may also be considered for Associate Membership provided they have testified experience in related areas for a period of no less than 10 years. The Associate Membership fee is 100 Saudi Riyals (25 US Dollars) per year.

Honorary Membership:

This membership is granted free of charge by a process of nomination to those who have provided exceptional services and contributions to the cause of forensic science, forensic medicine and the ASFSFM.

Members

At present, the Society has over 139 members from different fields of forensic sciences and forensic medicine from 12 different countries. A considerable percentage of these members are academics possessing doctoral degrees in related specializations.

Society Activities

The ASFSFM strives to actualize its aims through organizing academic events that it holds in cooperation with the Society's members, and institutions in the field of forensic science, education, health, and justice from all over the Arab and international world. Events include forums, meetings, conferences, symposiums, workshops, and exhibitions. This is part of the Society's strategy of providing non-specialists with knowledge of forensic science and forensic medicine, and raising the skills and knowledge of experts already working in these fields. Since the beginning of 2014 the Society has held the following events:

Training Course in Forensic Medicine

The Society organized this 5-day training course entitled, "Introduction to Forensic Medicine" from 16 -20 March 2014. Renowned forensic medicine experts from the Arab world were invited to conduct this course. Attendees included forensic scientists, security officials, and specialists from the Pakistani Interior Ministry.

Official Visit by Academics from Taiba University

Taiba University is located in the Saudi Arabian city of Madinah Al Munawarah. A delegation from the College of Law at Taiba University visited the Society's office and various academic institutions at Naif Arab University for Security Sciences.

Academic Meeting: Introducing Forensic Sciences

This event was organized by the Society in cooperation with the College of Forensic Sciences at NAUSS on April 24, 2014. This was attended by a delegation of students from King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah (KSA). The meeting introduced the various branches of forensic sciences including crime scene investigation, forensic DNA analysis, forensic toxicology, explosives, firearms and ballistics, document examination, counterfeiting, and forgery.

Workshop: Unification of Laboratory Standards in Arab Forensic Science Laboratories

This workshop was held in June 2014 at NAUSS. It aimed to look at the latest international standards in forensic science laboratories, and how far these standards compare to standards of work in forensic laboratories in the Arab world. The workshop also aimed to work towards unifying



the protocols used in the evaluation, quality testing, and accreditation of forensic laboratories.

Attendees included officials from the College of Forensic Science (NAUSS), the General Department of Criminal Evidence at the Saudi Ministry of Interior, the General Department of Poison Control Centers and Forensic Chemistry at the Saudi Ministry of Health, the Public Security Forensic Science Institute, the General Directorate for Combating Drugs, the Medical Services Department of the Saudi Interior Ministry, the Ministry of the National Guard, and the General Authority for Saudi Food and Drug Administration.

The workshop resulted in a number of important recommendations being put forward in the area of unifying the aforementioned forensic science laboratory protocols. The ASFSFM will work to put these recommendations into place with a clear plan and timescale so that they may be applied in practice.

ASFSFM Promotional Events

The Society has participated in a number of events in order to promote its work and activities. These include the following:

- The 2014 annual conference of the International Association of Law and Forensic Sciences (IALFS), which was held in Dubai.
- The 2014 Forum for Medical Services held by the Saudi Ministry of Health.
- The Academic Symposium of the General Department of Poison Control Centers and Forensic Chemistry held in Jeddah on April 04, 2014.

ASFSFM Publications

These publications will enable the Society to fulfill its aims and goals. The most important of these publications will be this journal – the AJFSFM. The Society will also publish a regular bulletin for Society members, and pamphlets and informative material to raise awareness of forensic sciences and forensic medicine. It also has future plans to publish books in forensic science and forensic medicine.

Through these means, the Society aims to spread new and creative research by scientists in academic and practical aspects of forensic science and forensic medicine – which will lead to the enrichment and development of research in these fields. It also aims to strengthen academic relations between the Society and personnel working in forensic science and related institutions.

ASFSFM Upcoming Events

The ASFSFM strives to provide the scientific community with the most up-to-date information related to its specialist fields with events, activities, and academic programs that achieve this purpose. It also strives to develop and strengthen academic research through active participation in conferences, symposiums, and academic forums which are at the forefront of its specialization and which are attended by experts from all over the world.

The Society will hold two events in the near future: The Arab Meeting on Forensic Sciences and Forensic Medicine (26th– 28th October, 2014) and the 2nd International Arab Forensic Science and Forensic Medicine Conference (November 2015).

The 1st Arab Meeting on Forensic Science and Forensic Medicine (26th – 28th October, 2014)

This meeting has the following aims:

- Looking at the latest developments in forensic science and forensic medicine
- Discussing the current state of forensic science and forensic medicine in Arab countries and the role of these specializations in actualizing security in all areas of life
- Examining the educational, training, and technical needs required to achieve this goal
- Looking at successful experience and practice in forensic science and forensic medicine, both regionally and internationally
- Strengthening relations between the Society and institutions involved in forensic science and forensic medicine
- Encouraging research into forensic science and forensic medicine and providing a platform for the exchange of ideas and experience among attendees

The following topics will be discussed

- Forensic science and forensic medicine: application, legislation, and law
- Experiences in unifying the systems and standards of forensic sciences and forensic medicine
- Recent advances in forensic science and forensic medicine
- Experience in teaching forensic science and forensic medicine in universities in the Arab world and internationally
- Forensic science and forensic medicine in cases of



terrorism and weapons of mass destruction

- The role of the ASFSPM in developing and strengthening collective Arab academic and research work in the field of forensic science and forensic medicine

Attendees

- Specialists working in forensic science laboratories, forensic medicine and medicolegal experts; personnel from security sectors related to criminal justice, crime investigation, prevention and control; members of the ASFSPM, and experts from all over the Arab world.

The 2nd International Arab Forensic Science and Forensic Medicine Conference (November 2015)

This event will be held in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Association of Forensic Toxicologists (TIAFT), the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The conference has the following aims

- Looking at modern experience and practices in forensic science and forensic medicine
- Examining the latest research and academic based developments in these fields
- Strengthening cooperation between the ASFSPM and other specialist societies in the field of forensic science and forensic medicine
- Drawing together exceptional research in these fields, strengthening cooperation in scientific research, and providing a platform for the exchange of knowledge among attendees

The following subjects will be discussed

- Forensic sciences

- Forensic medicine
- Criminal justice
- Criminology
- Child abuse and domestic violence
- Bioterrorism
- Cyber crimes
- Nuclear security

Attendees

This event will be attended by academics and scientists from different universities and research centres, specialists working in forensic laboratories and professional forensic medicine associations, officials from health departments, and personnel working in various sectors related to the subject of security and justice.

In Summary, the ASFSPM wish to create a scientific platform for forensic scientists, medicolegal experts, academics and professionals to simultaneously communicate, collaborate and lead a joint scientific effort to improve the quality of forensic science education, research and justice, both regionally and internationally. Since its inception, the Society has been actively engaged in organizing different types of academic and professional events to move ahead with pursuing these objectives. But the task of fulfilling its commitments and earning worldwide recognition is huge. Tremendous, cohesive efforts are required to accomplish the vision and mission of the society. The ASFSPM needs your immense support and cooperation to meet this challenge. You can help the society in achieving its objectives by joining the ASFSPM and becoming an active member of the scientific community that is working to strengthen peace, security and justice in the whole world.

