Guest Editorial

Seventh International Conference on Composite Science & Technology (ICCST/7), American University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, January 2009

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This special issue of Applied Composite Materials comprises papers that were presented at the Seventh International Conference on Composite Science & Technology (ICCST/7) held at the American University of Sharjah (AUS) in the United Arab Emirates from the 20th to the 22nd of January 2009. ICCST/7 was organized jointly with the Third International Conference on Modeling, Simulation, and Applied Optimization (ICMSAO'09) that was held at the same time and venue as ICCST/7. Members of the international scientific and industrial community representing 35 countries attended the composite conference. The three keynote speakers: Professor Zafer Gürdal from TU Delft in the Netherlands, Professor Peter W. Beaumont from the University of Cambridge in the UK and Dr. Tia Benson Tolle from the Air force Research Laboratory in the USA, were the gathering point for the entire attendance. The conference was a grand success in terms of its scientific content and international participation.

As the name implies, this was the seventh in a series of highly successful biennial international conferences which commenced in South Africa in 1996. All of these conferences attracted a large international participation and aimed at promoting exchange of information on advances in the development, technology and application of composite materials. The ICCST conferences provide forums to discuss and observe the future trends in advanced materials and contribute to the ongoing process in science and technology.

The conference was organized into 25 technical sessions including two poster sessions. A total of 145 papers were presented at the conference covering the following themes: mechanics of composites, infrastructural use of composites, nondestructive evaluation & characterization of composites, fracture and fatigue of composites, numerical & mathematical modeling of composites, ceramic composites, metal-matrix composites, composite manufacturing, polymers and polymer composites, smart materials & structures, and nano-composites. Participants came from various countries around the world including Belarus, Canada, China, Croatia, Egypt, France, Malaysia, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, UK, and USA. Technical

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sessions on nano-composites, infrastructural use of composites, and numerical and mathematical modeling of composites drew greater interest from the participants.

The papers presented in this issue of Applied Composite Materials comprise original contributions submitted to us for publication in the special issue following the conference. Acceptance for publication was determined on the basis of the usual screening and review process of Applied Composite Materials. The 13 papers published in this special issue cover various aspects of mechanical properties, numerical modeling and non-destructive testing of composites. We trust that the readers of this special issue will benefit from the new ideas and results presented in these papers. On behalf of the Conference Organizing Committee, I wish to express sincere thanks to all the authors for their patience and invaluable contributions towards this special issue. We wish to express our gratitude and thanks to all the referees for their dedicated work in reviewing the manuscripts. Their comments have been invaluable in improving the general quality of the manuscripts. We are grateful to Dr. Peter W.R. Beaumont, the Editor-in-Chief for his advice and support in bringing out this special issue. Special thanks to Ms. Lenny Gumapac for her kind attention and timely response to authors and reviewers.

The photograph shows H.H. Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al-Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Sharjah and Dr. Peter Heath, the Chancellor of the American University of Sharjah joined by members of the AUS senior administration, the keynote speakers and the members of the organizing committees of both ICCST/7 and ICMSAO'09 conferences.