

Recently I was invited to attend the bi-annual Steering committee meeting of the EMGEN network, formerly known as Eastern Mediterranean Health Genomics and Biotechnology Network (EMHGBN). This was held at the Pasteur Institute of Iran in Tehran on January 29-30, 2012. Attending this meeting as the chief editor of Avicenna Journal of Medical Biotechnology (AJMB) was very informative and I became familiar with the goals of this international organization. The EMGEN network was established in 2004 on the recommendation and support of WHO/EMRO and participation of representatives from selected centers of excellence in Molecular biology, Biotechnology, and genomics from 22 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region including Iran. The names of these countries are listed on the website for the network (www.emgen.net). It also has useful information on the goals, membership, training programs, job opportunities, and newsletters of the organization. I recommend it to those interested in the role of biotechnology and genomics in health to visit the website and participate in the activities of the organization. As I understand, one of the major goals of EMGEN network is to increase awareness on the potentials and capacities of member countries in the fields of Biotechnology and genomics. More importantly, they aim to facilitate scientific collaborations among the scientists in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

After listening to the representatives from member countries attending the meeting, I was convinced that many more scientists from the fields of biotechnology and genomics in EMGEN network member countries ought to interact and collaborate on scientific projects before resources in member countries can be effectively shared in joint projects. For my part, I encourage eminent biotech and genomic scientists from the member countries to participate in AJMB's scientific activities through submission of original articles, opinions, reviews in fields such as Medical Biotechnology, Genomics, Nanobiotechnology, Bioinformatics, and Molecular Biology. Furthermore, the chief scientists from the member countries can participate in the AJMB's scientific activities in the capacity of associate editors and reviewers in their fields of expertise.

As the chief editor of AJMB, I would like to invite all the scientists in the EMGEN network countries working in the fields of Medical Biotechnology and genomics to actively participate in this network's activities. I would also like to inform those interested in obtaining research grants that funds have been made available by some member countries in the form of 50/50 contribution.

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