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MIT Contact: Janet Wasserstein

Phone: 617-253-4789 Email:Janetw@mit.edu

News Advisory

E-Learning for Developing Countries is Focus of MIT Workshop

Editors/Reporters:	You are invited to cover the Learning International Network Consortium (LINC) Workshop
When:	Thursday and Friday, February 6 and 7, 2003, 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
Where:	University Park Hotel, Cambridge, MA
Full Schedule:	http://ken.mit.edu/linc (login email: lincpress@dev.null, password: 48linc)

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. Over 60 invited participants from sixteen countries and the United States will convene in Cambridge, Massachusetts to look at higher education in developing countries by leveraging the Internet, television and radio technologies. The two-day workshop plans to establish LINC, the Learning International Networks Consortium, an MIT-managed project that will bring together academics and practitioners whose primary concern is quality higher education through e-learning in developing countries.

In addition to senior MIT faculty and policy makers from USAID, the World Bank, corporations and foundations, the following countries will be represented: Armenia, Canada, France, Hong Kong, Japan, India, Ireland, Iran, Israel, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Pakistan, Russia, Syria and the United Arab Emirates.

Professor Richard Larson, Professor of Electrical Engineering at MIT and Co-Editor of *Internet Forum 2001*, created the concept of LINC to address the needs of the growing youth oriented population demographic in developing countries and the fact that developing countries will be left further behind unless their youth receive quality higher level education.

Speakers, who will address distance learning initiatives in their respective countries, include Dr. Milad Fares Sebaaly, Provost, Syrian Virtual University; Dr. Naveed Malik, Rector, Virtual University of Pakistan and Dr. S. Sohail Naqvi, (Ministry of Science and Technology, (Pakistan); Dr. Judy Dori, Technion University (Israel); Dr. El-hadi Khaldi, Rector, Universite de la Formation Continue (Algeria); Dr. Magdallen Juma, African Virtual University; Ali Meghdari, senior faculty, Sharif University (Iran); and Yolanda Martinez de Hernandez, Virtual University (Mexico). Participants will also hear the latest developments on OpenCourseWare, MIT's large-scale, web-based electronic publishing initiative to make MIT course materials freely available for educators, students, and individual learners around the world. A full agenda, list of thirty speakers and their topics and bios are available at http://ken.mit.edu/linc (go to General Information).

Membership in LINC is open to individuals and institutions and will be supported financially by membership dues, foundation support, corporate funding and governmental institutions. Some of its early activities will include the creation of collaborative educational web sites, starter R&D projects in developing countries aimed at new initiatives such as alternative pedagogical models in e-learning; and the provision of technical assistance in training the trainers who will serve as initial key e-learning project managers.

The workshop is made possible by a generous grant from the Lounsbery Foundation.