NIAS AAAS ADVANCING SCIENCE, SERVING SOCIETY

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## India-U.S. Workshop on Science, Diplomacy and Policy

January 11-13, 2011

A Workshop on Science, Diplomacy, and Policy was jointly organized by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) at Bangalore, India between January 11 and 13, 2011. Supported by the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum, the goals of the Workshop were to strengthen the harnessing of the power of science diplomacy and to explore strategies for enhancing the capacity of both countries to conduct science diplomacy and cooperate on science components of global issues. The Workshop was characterized by high-level participation by over 45 academics, current and former Ambassadors, Admirals, Government Secretaries and other officials from both India and the United States.

The Workshop was inaugurated by Ambassador Ronen Sen who pointed out that India was a late starter in recognizing the link between science and diplomacy during the Green Revolution in the 1960s and asked the participants to see how the US and India could cooperate on the basis of India's aid programme in Afghanistan combining science and technology (S & T) with diplomacy, development and democracy. The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Alan Leshner, CEO of AAAS and Executive Publisher of the journal *Science,* who emphasized the role of S & T for building relationships between countries and exhorted the participants to come up with concrete suggestions for follow-up action.

In addition to the Inaugural Session, the Special session on Science Communications, and the final wrap-up session on the first, second and third days of the Workshop, there were five other sessions. The first was a recounting of Science and Diplomacy in action, the second dealt with Global Issues in Science and Diplomacy (including Climate Change, Oceans, Energy and Health), the third with Mechanisms in Science and Diplomacy (via academia, Science Academies and the private sector); the fourth focussed on Capacity Building for Science Diplomacy, and the fifth provided the Context for Science Diplomacy in both countries.

Five high-level conclusions emerged from the deliberations at the Workshop; each underpinned by an increased level of scientific cooperation.

1. With countries that have differences at the political level, science diplomacy through research cooperation and exchanges provides a good avenue for keeping channels of communication open and building trust.

2. While it is neither generally desirable nor possible to convert diplomats into scientists, nor scientists into diplomats; it is useful for them to understand each others' language and compulsions. It was recommended that initially, the "Foreign Policy Institutes" in both countries build capacity (by conducting courses with several sessions) in Science Diplomacy. Building capacity also requires that non-governmental and governmental organizations, and foreign policy and scientific communities work together (such as AAAS and NIAS and others from

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academia or private sector).

3. India and the United States should explore the possibility of undertaking joint projects in third countries (such as in Afghanistan), focusing on projects that can synergize the relative strengths and knowledge base in both countries.

4. Mechanisms and resources for sustained S & T cooperation are needed. Building upon the success of the Indo-US S & T Forum in holding joint meetings, for example, the establishment of a joint Indo-US Science Fund could catalyze collaborative medium-scale S & T research projects in both countries and provide a mechanism for developing priorities for large-scale projects.

5. Given the immense amount of goodwill and interaction that exists at the level of individual scientists and the large cooperative projects of the 1960's, the scientific relationship would benefit again from commitments to major large-scale projects. For this to happen, barriers to mobility of scientists in both directions should be minimized, and increased levels of *dedicated support* should be explored. The successes of 50:50 joint venture partnerships in the private sector provide one model.

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