

SUMMARY
NIH INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING
July 11, 2006

Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, Deputy Director, Fogarty International Center (FIC), welcomed the IC representatives to the FIC Conference Room. She next introduced the presenters at today's meeting, Ms. Julia Royall, Chief, International Programs, at the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and Ms. Cathleen Campbell, President and Chief Executive Officer, U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF).

NLM International Activities: Ms. Royall provided a presentation (attached) on the NLM international collaborations related to the contribution of information technology to the professional performance of researchers, librarians and healthworkers in Africa. Her presentation highlighted the overall history, assets and mission of the NLM. She noted that unlike overall NIH activities, which mainly support extramural research activities, the NLM activities are approximately 90 percent in support of intramural and 10 percent extramural efforts. She noted that the NLM collection of over 8 million items makes it the largest medical library in the world. Moreover, the collection has a strong international character with holdings in over 80 languages. Some 57 percent of the medical journals it holds are published abroad. She also highlighted the nature and use of the NLM's MEDLINE/PubMed online service and noted that almost half of MEDLINE/PubMed users live outside of the United States. Ms. Royall also provided a specific "snapshot" of international users by region and country to the group but admonished that seeking more specific information by individual users would violate privacy. She noted that NLM's international activities are focused on exploring how NLM systems can be applied in developing countries to capture and make available research, clinical and consumer health information to end users throughout the world, including Africa. She briefly highlighted 4 examples of NLM activities that contribute to international efforts to improve information availability to researchers and other end-users around the world. These examples were: the Multilateral Initiative on Malaria Communications Network (MIMCom – a network based on the needs as defined by malaria researchers); and E-pathology Project in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine at Makerere University; a Medline Plus for Africa initiative focusing on disease-specific tutorials; African Medical Journal Editors partnership; and, training workshops for African medical librarians.

Ms. Royall next introduced NLM's Dr. Paul Fontelo who provided an overview of the NLM's multilingual searchable database "Babel MeSH" and "PICO Linguist" that use medical terms or phrases in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, English (Chinese is also a language being examined for possible inclusion). Dr. Fontelo noted that under the search parameters, citations and abstracts retrieved will be in English only, but full-text links may be available (Full-text journals may require subscription.). This site can found at <http://babelmesh.nlm.nih.gov/pico.php> and <http://babelmesh.nlm.nih.gov/>. IC reps were encouraged to explore BabelMesh and Pico Linguist internally; however, they were asked to please contact Dr. Fontelo at fontelo@nlm.nih.gov regarding official release at which time (in the near future) NLM will appreciate wide distribution of the URL and any feedback that may be received about it. FIC intends to publicize the multilingual database through diplomatic channels.

U.S. Civilian Research and Development Foundation Activities: Ms. Campbell provided an overview of NIH-CRDF cooperation which has been manifested since 1996 when the CRDF was founded as a Congressionally-sponsored not-for-profit initiative. She noted that the CRDF mission continues to support exceptional, peer reviewed research projects that offer international scientists an alternative to emigration. The CRDF has provided \$14.3 million of funding to 232 biomedical awards for scientists mainly in Eurasia. Most funds for the CRDF program awards have come from the U.S. State Department, NSF, and NIH. These awards have been made consistent with the following CRDF goals: (1) supporting exceptional, peer-reviewed research projects that offer FSU scientists alternatives to emigration; (2) advancing the transition of FSU weapons scientists into civilian research activities; (3) developing industry-oriented collaborations to help move applied research to market; and, (4) strengthening research and education in universities abroad. The success rate of the CRDF Grants Program (CGP) is between 9 and 10 percent and awards usually are for a 2-year duration and average \$60,000 in size. CRDF funding leverages significant NIH funding (over \$9 million since 1997) in support of biomedical research activities. In 2006-2007, CRDF plans to explore opportunities for further collaboration in HIV/AIDS and related infections, avian influenza, and to expand efforts in Baltic, Balkans, and Middle East and North Africa countries and would seek continued input from NIH priorities for biomedical research. She noted that a request for NIH funding was sent to FIC (which has been forward to all ICs) for the 2006-2007 period for possible contributions by NIH ICs through NSF to further activities of mutual interest related to biomedical and behavioral research. Further information on the CRDF activities can be obtained at www.crdf.org or by emailing information@crdf.org. Ms. Campbell's PowerPoint presentation is also attached. IC's are to respond to FIC regarding their ability to provide a contribution for CRDF before August 2006.

Announcements: Dr. Hrynkow noted that Professor Sir Richard Peto of Oxford University was serving as a Visiting Fogarty Scholar and would be making a presentation to NIH colleagues on July 13 at the Natcher Building. She noted that Secretary Leavitt recently signed three Memoranda of Understanding on HIV/AIDS, environment and child health with his Indian counterpart. She thanked the IC representatives for their efforts to meet with Dr. Daim from Afghanistan's Ministry of Health recently. She noted that FIC would be working with the ICs regarding the Surgeon General's pending Global Health Report and call to action. Dr. James Herrington, Director FIC Division of International Relations (DIR), introduced Dr. Marya Levintova as the new DIR program Officer for Russia and Eurasia. He also introduced Ms. Jasmine Calix as a new addition to DIR responsible for controlled correspondence.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 13, 2006, at 1 p.m. in the NIH Stone House.

Attendance:

Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, Chairperson; Mr. George Herrfurth, Executive Secretary; Ms. Julia Royall and Dr. Paul Fontelo, NLM; Dr. Jose Serrano, NIDDK; Ms. Maria Teresa Canto, NIDCR; Ms. Natalie Tomitch, NIH/OAR; Ms. Dale Weiss, NIDA; Dr. Karen Babich, NIMH; Dr. John Haller, NIBIB; Dr. Sherry Mills, OER; Dr. Yuan Liu, NINDS; Dr. Karl Western, Ms. Katie Herz and Mr. David Sorrentino, NIAID; Dr. Michael Chang, NCRR; Dr. Nell Armstrong, NINR; Ms. Peggy Murray, NIAAA; Dr. Howard Hoffman, NIDCD; Ms. Cathy Campbell, Ms. Siri Oswald and Mr. Eric Novotny, CRDF, Ms. Nina Jones, BYU/CCA; Ms. Lou Valdez, Mr. Sam Adeniyi-Jones, and CAPT Dan Miller HHS/OS/OGHA. FIC staff: Dr. James Herrington, Mr. Kevin Bialy, Ms. Judy Levin, Dr. Marya Levintova, Dr. Chris Schonwalder, Mr. John Makulowich, Ms. Jasmine Calix