Terms of Reference For the Role of Science Diplomat

+ Introduction
Participants in the Regional Forum on Science & Technology Diplomacy: Towards Transformative and Inclusive Partnership for a Sustainable Future, held in Amman, Jordan on December 1-2, 2015,

Recognizing the important contributions of science and technology in the domestic and international decision-making cycles towards addressing common challenges in the region, and Recognizing the essential role of science and technology in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;

Recognizing the valuable role that science diplomats may play in informing and executing decision-making in the Arab region,

Recommend the following Terms of Reference to establish and expand the role of Science Diplomats in the region:

+ Purpose
The Science Diplomat promotes scientific and technical advice in policy decision-making. The Science Diplomat works to ensure that policy decision makers at local, national and international levels have access to sound, independent scientific advice. The Science Diplomat encourages the use of science and technology to achieve domestic and foreign policy

+ Scope
The Science Diplomat operates at the nexus of science and policy and recognizes that science informs decision-making in economic, environmental, health, national security, development and other policies. The potential scope of work is broad. It may involve multiple scientific disciplines. It may focus on a policy decision at the local, national or international level. And it may result in a range of implementation vehicles, such as a specific project, strategy, legislation, or international agreement.

+ Position
The functions of a Science Diplomat may be fulfilled through both formal and informal means. Recognizing the importance of science diplomacy, priority should be given to creating formal science diplomat positions that empower the incumbent to ensure science advice in policy decision-making.

Science diplomat positions may be established within national governments (both executive and legislative branches), international bodies and the non-government sector. Within governments, priority should be given to establishing science diplomat positions in foreign ministries and international organizations.

Science diplomats may operate at all levels, ranging from entry level positions to senior positions. For example, the Science Diplomat position may be created at the highest levels of government (e.g., Prime Minister's office) or within a leading science (R&D) agency involved in policymaking.

Other mechanisms, such as the formation of science advisory committees, temporary personnel assignments, creation of science fellowships, and encouragement of informal networks, should be used to fulfill the science diplomat functions or augment the work of those assigned as science diplomats.

+ Mandate
The role of the Science Diplomat is as follows:

1. Provide advice on science and technology issues in policy decisions.
2. Inform and educate policy decision makers about science and technology issues through formal training and informal consultations
3. Educate the science community about the importance of science diplomacy through formal training programs, speeches, panels at scientific meetings, etc.
Mandates Continued:

4. Provide technical expertise on policy issues/negotiations directly or by engaging committees of S&T experts.
5. Advocate for science in policy making decisions on domestic and international issues.
6. Serve as liaison to domestic and international science community. Build networks of scientists capable of providing expert advice to policymakers in diverse scientific disciplines.

7. Communicate and educate the general public on the importance of science diplomacy.
8. Represent the country in international science meetings or negotiations.
9. Negotiate and oversee implementation of international science and technology agreements.

10. Promote bilateral, regional or multilateral programs or initiatives that incorporate science and technology cooperation, with a particular focus on using science cooperation to build bridges between countries.
11. Advocate for science in policy making decisions on domestic and international issues.
12. Serve as liaison to domestic and international science community.
13. Communicate and educate the general public on the importance of science diplomacy.

+ Competencies

A Science Diplomat should have the following competencies:

1. Science & Technology:
A science diplomat should have a degree and work experience in science or engineering. For senior positions, a science diplomat should be a recognized expert in his/her field of science/engineering.

2. Public policy:
The science diplomat operates at the intersection of science and public policy. He/she must have demonstrated experience incorporating science in domestic or international public-policy decision-making.

3. Communications:
A science diplomat must have exceptionally strong communications skills. A good science diplomat must be able to explain complex S&T issues to policymakers and others without science training. A science diplomat should be able to communicate to the public at large.

4. Networking:
A science diplomat must be able to convene scientific experts in multiple disciplines to provide sound, independent advice.

5. Negotiation Skills:
Science diplomacy requires strong negotiation skills to be able to achieve results internationally, regionally or domestically. A science diplomat must be able to build consensus through negotiations.

6. Ethics:
A science diplomat must operate with the highest level of ethics to ensure fairness, transparency and openness in domestic and international agendas.