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President John F. Kennedy

From his address on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary Convocation of the National Academy of Sciences, October 22, 1963

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The Academies promote the use of science, engineering, and medicine to enhance the security and well-being of people throughout the world and to ease disparities in human welfare. To accomplish this, the Academies cooperates with partner organizations and national and global networks of academies to provide evidence-based advice to their governments, policy makers, and the public, thus strengthening and shaping policy and programs worldwide.

Priorities for the National Academies’ international work include:

- Furthering Sustainable Development
  - Energy and the environment
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  - Food security
  - Mitigating and adapting to climate change
  - Protecting biodiversity
- Enhancing Global Security
  - Emerging infectious diseases
  - Health surveillance
  - Health care quality
  - Containing the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons
  - Preventing and recovering from conflict
  - Averting and responding to natural and man-made disasters
- Building Human and Institutional Capital
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  - Strengthening education systems
  - Improving public access to scientific, technical, and health information
  - Supporting ethical systems and public-service mechanisms
  - Defending human rights of scientists, engineers, and health professionals
  - Fostering international links among young scientists

Toward these ends, the National Academies works in tandem with counterpart academies and organizations around the world, such as the InterAcademy Panel, InterAcademy Council, InterAcademy Medical Panel, International Council on Science, and International Council of Academies of Engineering and Technological Sciences. The presidents and foreign secretaries of the NAS, NAE, and IOM serve as official representatives to these international organizations.

For more information, including program units involved in these activities, reports and report translations, as well as new resources and services for the international community, can be found at www.nationalacademies.org/international.
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The Academies promotes the use of science, engineering, and medicine to enhance the security and well-being of people throughout the world and to ease disparities in human welfare. To accomplish this, the Academies seeks to build bridges among nations and to increase the capacity of both individual national academies and regional and global networks of academies to provide evidence-based advice to their governments, policy makers, and the public, thus strengthening and shaping policy and programs worldwide.

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Toward these ends, the National Academies works in tandem with counterpart academies and organizations around the world, such as the InterAcademy Panel, InterAcademy Council, and other international organizations. The National Academies’ international work is focused on four main areas: responding to critical global challenges; building capacity in developing countries; pursuing direct relationships with scientists and organizations worldwide; and advising the U.S. government.

The National Academies’ extensive efforts in international outreach are focused in four main areas: responding to critical global challenges; building capacity in developing countries; pursuing direct relationships with scientists and organizations worldwide; and advising the U.S. government. For ongoing international activity, see the National Academies’ website at www.nationalacademies.org/international.
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The U.S. National Academies activities form an extensive effort that is concentrated in four main areas: responding to critical global challenges; building capacity in developing countries; pursuing direct relationships with scientists and organizations worldwide; and advising the U.S. government. The examples presented here illustrate the range of activities the Academies has undertaken in these areas. Additional information, including program units involved in these activities, reports and report translations, as well as resources and services designed for the international community, can be found at www.nationalacademies.org/international.

SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & MEDICINE
WORKING TOWARD A BETTER WORLD

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE U.S. NATIONAL ACADEMIES

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PRIORITY AREAS FOR ONGOING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

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Many of the world’s greatest health, environmental, and security threats are beyond the ability of any one nation to confront alone. The National Academies is ready to tackle this global challenge by working with its scientific partners to conduct research to the problems that affect the health and well-being of countries around the world. With its breadth of expertise, the National Academies is able to mobilize the brightest scientific minds from across the globe to address the threats facing our world. From the African child at risk to an entire population from the rising threat of nuclear proliferation.

**Energy and the Environment**

Recognizing that the increasing global demand for energy and the environment, the National Academy developed the Web resource Internationalization of the Sciences (and Engineering) and the Social and Human Sciences) and Nuclear Fuel Cycle: Goals, Strategies, and Challenges to strengthen the scientific, technology, and health initiatives of developing countries. It builds science academies’ awareness about their policy makers and provides independent scientific advice to those governments, and it enables talented scientists and researchers to work with their foreign counterparts to solve pressing problems and support efficient programs.

**Cooperation Program with Pakistan**

The National Academy of Sciences and Engineering Technology Cooperation Program is a cross-institutional initiative that strengthens ties between two countries. The program has improved education and research at Pakistan’s higher-learning institutions, allowed public and private science to support industry competitiveness, and improved the quality of life for Pakistan people.

**Population Data in Support of Humanitarian Relief Efforts**

Effective humanitarian relief efforts depend on reliable information about the social and political upheavals that displace people and disrupt societies. Population data help humanitarian organizations provide more effective relief to people and communities in dire need, including the unavailability of affordable drugs. Out of this effort came the report Collecting Population Data to Support Humanitarian Relief Efforts: Five Years of Experience with the Population Demographic Surveys Program at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

**Advancing Science, Engineering, and Medicine in Developing Countries**

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**Building Bridges in the Middle East**

During the past 50 years, the National Academies has worked closely with academic and professional colleagues in Jordan, Israel, and Palestine to forge scientific cooperation and to develop joint study projects. Water for the Future: The West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel, and Jordan: Field technical surveys, workshops, and training workshops have provided real insights into the future of water resources in the Middle East.

**Fighting Malaria**

Each year, the mosquito-borne disease malaria kills nearly one million Africans—all of them of the age of five. Deeply concerned about this worsening issue, the National Academies launched a collaboration, called Fighting Malaria, to address the need to conquer this disease. From this effort came the report Fight Malaria: A National Strategy.

**Reducing Earthquake Damage**

The National Academies has worked closely with the science academies of Jordan, Israel, and Palestine to forge scientific cooperation and to develop joint study projects. Water for the Future: The West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel, and Jordan: Field technical surveys, workshops, and training workshops have provided real insights into the future of water resources in the Middle East.

**Increasing Agricultural Productivity**

Increased agricultural productivity is critical to reducing poverty and providing food for expanding populations. The National Academies, in partnership with the CGIAR, has developed the Web resource Internationalization of the Sciences (and Engineering) and the Social and Human Sciences) and Nuclear Fuel Cycle: Goals, Strategies, and Challenges to strengthen the scientific, technology, and health initiatives of developing countries. It builds science academies’ awareness about their policy makers and provides independent scientific advice to those governments, and it enables talented scientists and researchers to work with their foreign counterparts to solve pressing problems and support efficient programs.

**Monitoring a Crucial Health Program**

In 2003, Congress authorized legislation that included the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a comprehensive five-year initiative to help the world fight the AIDS pandemic. The National Academies was asked by the Department of State to monitor PEPFAR and report on its progress. The committee’s report, Monitoring a Crucial Health Program, has provided independent analysis of PEPFAR’s performance and has been used to inform the legislation that has strengthened the program.

**Reducing Water Pollution**

There is an emphasis on the long-term strategic planning and implementation of plans that improve the quality of water. In a report, The Water Quality in the United States, the National Academies recommended a series of steps for improving the nation’s water and wastewater systems and management and its many programs.

**Science, Technology, and Health in Foreign Policy**

The National Academies is dedicated to bringing together talented, concerned, and motivated scientists and engineers to work with their foreign counterparts to solve pressing problems and support efficient programs.

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**Asadi: Scientists and Organizations Worldwide**

In 2008, Congress authorized legislation that included the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) as a comprehensive five-year initiative to help the world fight the AIDS pandemic. The National Academies was asked by the Department of State to monitor PEPFAR and report on its progress. The committee’s report, Monitoring a Crucial Health Program, has provided independent analysis of PEPFAR’s performance and has been used to inform the legislation that has strengthened the program.
The Pervasive Role of Sciences and Organizations Worldwide

The National Academies has identified some 60 emerging technologies that could potentially improve the health and well-being of billions of people around the world. In its report "Science, Technology, and Health in Foreign Policy," the National Academies identified that science, technology, and health can enhance U.S. foreign policy and foreign assistance programs.

Jefferson Science Fellowship Program

The Jefferson Science Fellowship Program (JSP) commissions experienced, accomplished, and internationally recognized science, engineering, and mathematics professionals as full-time, non-exclusive, non-competitive, non-salaried U.S. Government experts. JSP Fellows are chosen for their achievements, communication skills, and interest in participating in U.S. foreign policy as a non-governmental expert. Fellows typically work for one year as U.S. Government experts on short-term projects. Based on the Institute of Medicine's 2007 evaluation of JSP, the U.S. government has decided to continue the program for another five years to work on select projects.

Science and Security

The U.S. government has a responsibility to protect its citizens and national security interests while promoting peaceful uses of science, technology, and health in support of international policies. The National Academies has developed a process to examine and consider the potential and actual threats from emerging technologies and to provide independent, evidence-based advice to its government.

REASONING TO CRITICAL GLOBAL CHALLENGES

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The National Academies was established to advise the U.S. government on science, technology, and health issues. One of their goals is to ensure that the United States can use its scientific resources to respond to global challenges. The National Academies aims to provide independent, evidence-based advice to their governments. With ASADI support, the science academies create awareness among their policy makers and provide science-based insights when addressing critical topics. In its report Tools and Methods for Estimating Human Rights, the committee has defended hundreds of technologies and scientific knowledge in support of human rights, including their freedom to publish, assemble, voice opinions, travel, seek and impart information and ideas, and share in scientific advancement. The committee has also defended hundreds of human rights in areas such as the right to a safe and healthful environment, the right to a sustainable environment, and the right to a fair and just social order.

Frontiers of Science Symposia

For more than two decades, the National Academies’ Frontiers of Science series has brought together leading scientists and policymakers to explore emerging trends and priorities in science, technology, and health. Each symposium focuses on a specific topic and brings together scientists, policymakers, and other stakeholders to discuss the latest research and its implications for society.

Strengthening International Security

Nuclear power offers a potential alternative to fossil fuels for meeting growing global demand for electricity. However, nuclear power generation is a complex and challenging process that requires significant investment and expertise in the fields of engineering, technology, and policy. The National Academies address nuclear, chemical, and biological threats by working with international partners to promote secure and effective nuclear energy and research.

Energy and the Environment

Researchers from the National Academies have identified energy and the importance of addressing that need as critical global challenges. The energy and environment programs focus on understanding and addressing the challenges of climate change, energy security, and sustainability. The programs engage with international partners and publish studies on topics related to drinking water quality and water supply for human and environmental health.

Safe Drinking Water

Clean drinking water is a basic human need. Sadly, more than one in per year, lack access to safe drinking water, and more than one in six people still lack access to this precious commodity. The National Academies have produced peer-reviewed reports on such critical issues as water for the future: the west bank and gaza strip, israel, and jordan, providing the information and tools necessary to address water scarcity and build resilient communities.

Building Bridges in the Middle East

In 2003, Congress authorized legislation that included the U.S. government’s Global Health Security Agenda, known as PEPFAR. In 2004, the U.S. government initiated the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a comprehensive five-year initiative to help reduce the burden of infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, in sub-Saharan Africa. The program has been instrumental in supporting the efforts of the world’s largest AIDS-fighting organization, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). In 2007, the National Academies published a report entitled “Building Bridges in the Middle East” to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the PEPFAR program and offer recommendations for future programming.

Developing and Promoting Human Rights

Jefferson Science Fellowship Program

The Jefferson Science Fellowship Program (Jefferson Fellows) is a competitive, non-merit, bipartisan program that provides the opportunity for U.S. citizens to work as policy advisors to the State Department. The program is designed to foster a broader, more diverse, and more experienced cadre of U.S. citizen professionals who can provide policy advice to the State Department and contribute to the advancement of U.S. foreign policy goals.

Science and Technology, Health, and Food in Foreign Policy

The National Academies have been working to ensure that science and technology are used to address complex challenges, including food security, public health, and environmental sustainability. The Academies have published numerous reports on the importance of international scientific openness in such areas as the classification of information, export controls, and visa regulations. Recognizing that science strengthens security, the National Academies work to ensure that science and technology are used to address security challenges, and that policy makers have access to the latest research and analysis.

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Advising the U.S. Government

Building capacity in developing countries

A strong science and technology base facilitates programs and creates a promising future for a nation and its people. The National Academies works with associations of academies worldwide to strengthen the science, technology, and health initiatives of developing countries. It helps science academies create awareness among their policy makers and provide strategic advice to these governments, and it enables scientists to coordinate responses to their foreign counterparts in the face of pressing problems and support effective programs.

Cooperative Program with Pakistan

Pakistan is the fifth largest country in the world and was the first country outside of the U.S. to partner with the National Academies in 1950. The Cooperative Program is a cross-disciplinary initiative that strengthens linkages between the two countries. The program has improved education and research in Pakistan's highest-learning institutions, allowing public and private science to support industry competitiveness, and improved the quality of life for Pakistanis.

Population Data in Support of Humanitarian Relief Efforts

In recent years, governments and international agencies, including UN agencies, have recognized the potential of using population size and distribution data for humanitarian relief efforts. To improve the accuracy and timeliness of such data, the National Academies published, as part of this effort, a report called "Our Changing Demographics: Evidence on Changing Patterns of Population and Its Bearing on Policy and Practice." The publication was carried out with the support of natural scientists from the United States and researchers in China.

Strengthening African Science Academies

In the last few years, the National Academies of Sciences have developed a strong partnership with Africa. The African Academy of Sciences launched the African Union Science, Technology and Innovation Project (AUSTIP) in 2008 with support from the National Academies. This project aims to strengthen the capacity of African science academies to manage their strategic plans and programs.

Improving Road Safety

In many developing countries, road safety is a critical issue. The National Academies have been working with international partners to develop strategies and programs to improve road safety in these countries. The program focuses on developing solutions to address the root causes of road crashes and promoting community engagement in implementing these solutions.

More Effective Farming

In many developing countries, agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for the majority of the population. The National Academies have been involved in promoting more effective farming practices to increase productivity and improve the quality of life for farmers and their families. The program focuses on developing and disseminating innovative technologies and practices to enhance agricultural productivity.

Stronger Global Security

Nuclear power offers a potential alternative to fossil fuels for meeting growing global demand for energy. However, the development and use of nuclear energy carry significant risks, including the potential for nuclear proliferation and the threat of nuclear accidents. The National Academies address nuclear, chemical, and biological threats by working with international partners to develop strategies and programs to address these challenges.

Science, Technology, and Health in Foreign Policy

Science and technology are increasingly important in foreign policy decision-making. The National Academies have been involved in helping governments and international organizations to use science and technology to inform their foreign policy decisions. The program focuses on developing strategies and programs to leverage science and technology for achieving foreign policy goals.

Jefferson Science Fellowship Program

The Jefferson Science Fellowship Program is designed to attract and deploy exceptionally talented, experienced, and diverse groups of U.S. citizens to work abroad for a period of up to two years as professional colleagues who are unjustly imprisoned for peacefully exercising their universal human rights. The program supports the justice and dignity of the Jefferson Science Fellows, and the broader human rights of the National Academies worldwide are encouraged and assisted by the Committee on Human Rights to defend the rights and freedoms of all those who are taking a stand for the principles of science, technology, and human rights.
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Future priorities include:

- Building core capabilities in developing countries
- Building capacity in science and technology initiatives
- Supporting research in the biological sciences
- Enhancing science and technology education
- Developing global and local networks of academies to provide multidisciplinary advice to governments, policy makers, and the public
- Strengthening and shaping policy and programs worldwide

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