

search coordination for a number of international organizations, including UNESCO, UNU, and the FAO. Prior joining ICSU, she was a Giorgio Ruffolo Research Fellow in the Sustainability Science Program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

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The 2014 AAAS Award for Science Diplomacy goes to Zafra M. Lerman

Zafra M. Lerman, creator and advocate for the Biennial Malta Conferences, which promote international scientific cooperation and diplomacy by convening scientists from 15 Middle Eastern nations, has been chosen by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to receive the 2014 Award for Science Diplomacy.

Lerman—an accomplished chemist, science educator, and humanitarian—serves as president of the Malta Conferences Foundation. She was honored by AAAS for her efforts to “elevate the use of scientific cooperation as an instrument of peace, and as a pathway to better understand the role of science in addressing major societal challenges in the broader Middle East, despite the political barriers that exist at the official levels.”

The Biennial Malta Conferences bring together scientists from Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, the Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates to collaborate on shared science-based concerns such as regional water quality, solar-energy conversion and storage, science curricula, green chemistry, and chemistry safety and security. (Reports on the Malta Conferences have regularly appeared in *Chemistry International* since 2004; a compilation of these references and many others is available at www.malta-conferencesfoundation.org)

AAAS Chief International Officer Vaughan Turekian said: “Many of the scientists who participate in the Malta Conferences could not otherwise meet face-to-face because of tensions between governments. Dr. Lerman has brought together scientists at all levels, from Nobel Prize winners to early-career researchers and students, to build collaborative links that extend beyond scientific interactions.”

The AAAS Award for Science Diplomacy dates to 1992. It recognizes an individual or small group working in the scientific and engineering or foreign affairs

communities making an outstanding contribution to furthering science diplomacy. Renamed in 2010 by the AAAS Board of Directors, the Award consists of a plaque and an honorarium of \$5,000. The AAAS Award for Science Diplomacy was bestowed upon Lerman during the 181st AAAS Annual Meeting in San Jose, California, 12-16 February 2015.

www.aaas.org/news/zafra-m-lerman-receives-2014-aaas-award-science-diplomacy

OPCW-The Hague Award Presented at 19th Conference of States Parties

On 1 December 2014, the opening day of the Nineteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at the headquarters of the OPCW in The Hague, Dr. Robert Mathews (Australia) and the Finnish Institute for the Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN) were jointly presented with the inaugural OPCW-The Hague Award.

The Award was created by the OPCW as an outcome of its winning the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize. The Award is supported by a financial contribution from the City of The Hague. It is intended “to honour and recognise individuals and organizations that have made an outstanding contribution to achieving a world free of chemical weapons.”

Dr. Mathews and VERIFIN have made valuable contributions toward the goal of reducing and eliminating chemical weapons. In keeping with the purpose of the Award, they have been credited with providing “sustained leadership and support to the development of key concepts of the Convention, as well as to initiatives to promote chemical disarmament and non-proliferation around the world.”

Dr. Mathews is Head of the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Arms Control Unit in the Australian Defence Science and Technology Organization. He has dedicated his career to the disarmament and non-proliferation of chemical weapons. He made significant contributions to the final drafting of the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as to its establishment, implementation and promotion as a unique instrument eliminating an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. He has been involved in several IUPAC projects and is currently part of the task group “Updating, Piloting, and Disseminating Educational Material for Raising Awareness of the