

**Comments by Robert H. Rutford on the occasion of the award of the SCAR Medal for  
International Scientific Coordination, August, 2010, Buenos Aires, Argentina**

Thank you, President Kennicutt, and thanks to all those who participated in the selection process. It would be almost impossible to give personal thanks to all with whom I have worked, but I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to give a public thanks (and one that is most meaningful to me) to Margie, my wife of 56 years, whose support and understanding made my Antarctic activities and adventures possible.

My 40+ years of involvement in SCAR have been in a variety of roles: as a presenter of scientific papers at SCAR Symposia, as the U.S. Alternate Delegate and later as the Delegate, as a Vice-President, then President, and finally Past-President of SCAR and Honorary Member. In addition I attended several Treaty meetings as the SCAR representative. In this variety of positions I had the pleasure of working with a broad spectrum of international peers from both the scientific and political worlds that operate in Antarctica.

I have witnessed the growth of SCAR from the so-called “Old Boys Club” of the original 12 to present membership. I witnessed the separation and evolution of the SCAR Working Group on Logistics into the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs as a separate player in the Antarctic scenario.

My involvement in and contribution to international scientific collaboration began fairly early in my Antarctic career. In 1959 I had the opportunity to join a New Zealand field party from Victoria University in the Dry Valleys. In 1963-64, two international geologists joined the University of Minnesota party in the Sentinel Mountains and international cooperation and coordination became a part of all future field parties and research efforts with which I was involved.

The Ross Ice Shelf Project involving seven countries and numerous universities and agencies was an example of a large SCAR international activity. Jim Zumberge insured that this proposed effort was thoroughly vetted by a full-day workshop held in Melbourne, organized by Bill Budd and chaired by Gordon Robin. It was clear from that workshop that there was great international interest in the proposed research. The constraints on the drilling effort and equipment that came out of these meetings looked very similar to what the international community is dealing with today regarding sub-glacial lake drilling. My role was that of the initial coordinator of the project and it is interesting to note that one of the first penetrations of the Ross Ice Shelf was completed by a small drill designed and operated by the late Igor Zotikov from the USSR.

My involvement in the international scene increased as my role in the U.S. Program changed. Continued political action both within and outside the Treaty, primarily in the U.N., created an environment that demanded increased international dialogue, coordination, and cooperation. Research projects in the Antarctic involving international investigators became and continue to be the norm.

By the turn of the century it was clear that the time had come for a review of SCAR and its separate and almost exclusive Working Groups. The push for a reorganization of the organization came as a loud and clear message to the SCAR Executive. As the newly elected president of SCAR, it fell to me to find an individual with the expertise and experience to lead such a study group. The recommendations from the study group faced great resistance initially but when finally implemented led to the much more efficient operation of the organization that we have today. The elimination of the many internal and artificial barriers between the various disciplines has led to activities involving not only cross-disciplinary activities but also increased international activity.

The greatest testimony to the success of the efforts to bring the sciences together is the success of meetings such as this one here in Buenos Aires. The increase in the number of papers presented by representatives from the full spectrum of SCAR countries is apparent. What is also most important is the fact that I know only a few of the presenters – this means that not only is there wider representation but there is also a new and dynamic generation of scientists in Antarctica today.

I am proud that SCAR received the award of the Prince of Asturias Award for International Cooperation, 2002, during my presidency, and I am very proud to be the recipient of the SCAR Medal for International Science Coordination in 2010. My sincere thanks to all and best wishes for bigger and better international science programs organized, carried out and conducted with the SCAR stamp of approval.