



WEAPONS-TO-PLOUGHSHARES

Canadian Ostap Hawaleshka has been Executive Director of this international Centre in Kyiv since its founding in 1993, and will be returning to Canada at the end of this year. Prof. Hawaleshka was recently awarded the Academician M. K. Yanhel Medal by the Ukrainian Federation of Cosmonautics on behalf of the scientific establishments from Dnipropetrovsk – a clear reflection of how the STCU's efforts are valued. He shared his experiences with the Monitor when he visited Canada this summer.

It is clearly the hope of Western countries that Ukraine keep its considerable pool of talented scientists in Ukraine, rather than have them leave to other countries, possibly to those where their presence may not be particularly desirable. Of no lesser importance is the other desire to contribute significantly to the conversion of Ukrainians - those former weapons scientists - not only in the orientation of their scientific work but, more importantly, in the conversion of their attitudes and ways of working from those in the Former Soviet Union, to those prevalent in competitive, market-driven economies.

The STCU has, in its very short existence, already achieved an enviable degree of public recognition, independence and effectiveness.

The STCU is an intergovernmental organization, the first such, resident in Ukraine, that was established by an Agreement signed on 15 Oct. 1993 by its four founding parties: Canada, Sweden, Ukraine and the United States. The signed Agreement was put into force by Presidential Decree. The STCU began its first organizational steps in November 1994 and, after the arrival of its Canadian executive director, became fully registered in Ukraine on 14 February 1995. Its main purpose is specified in the Agreement: To support R&D activities by Ukrainian scientists and engineers, formerly involved with weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as part of the general process of conversion from a largely centralized planning military to a civilian, market-driven competitive environment, more useful for Ukraine.

For the initial period the donor countries have allocated the following funds: Canada - US\$2 million; Sweden: US\$1.5 million and the U.S.A. - US\$15 million, for an initial total of US\$18.5 million. Canada's total contribution, including its share of the STCU's operating costs, and Canadian costs, is \$5.0 million CDN. As its contribution, Ukraine pledged to provide suitable office premises, their maintenance, security and facilities for telecommunication.

The STCU is governed by a Board whose members include: Prof. W. Janischewskij (Canada, University of Toronto), Ambassador M. Hallqvist (Sweden), Dr. V. Baryakhtar (Ukraine, V.P. National Ukrainian Academy of Sciences), and Dr. John Boright (U.S., former Science Advisor to the President). The Board, on behalf of the four Parties to the STCU Agreement, is responsible for the general actions and directions of the STCU. The STCU's executive and administrative officer are to be from Canada. Currently they are Prof. Ostap Hawaleshka and Lubomyr Banias, both of Winnipeg. Most of the staff (up to 30) are Ukrainian, with scientists and other professionals making up about one-half.

Under very difficult and convoluted circumstances, caused by the fact that the STCU was, and is, the very first intergovernmental agency in Ukraine, resulting in uncertainties on behalf of the Ukrainian bureaucracy as to how to handle such an unfamiliar type of organization, its management was able to eventually succeed in getting the STCU officially registered and recognized. After very difficult negotiations, essentially all rights and privileges accorded to the STCU in the signed four-country Agreement were secured. The STCU enjoys a tax-free and duty-free status, equivalent to a diplomatic mission, with respect to its working staff (expatriate and Ukrainian), all Ukrainian scientists and research staff involved in R&D projects the STCU funds, as well as all equipment and supplies purchased for its own use and for the use of those projects. This is extremely important as it allows the STCU to spread its funding resources over more R&D projects, thus redirecting more former weapons scientists towards peaceful activities.

At the same time, the STCU's management was able to obtain a free-standing building suitable for its use. The original empty, unfinished concrete shell, was, in a matter of less than five months, completed to close to Western standards, furnished with extremely modern, specially-tailored modular office furniture from Herman Miller in London, and equipped with the latest type of computers (one for each staff member) and modern photocopying and communications equipment. Anyone, familiar with the difficulty of obtaining telephone lines in Ukraine will surely appreciate the fact that the STCU has secured 22 separate phone lines!

On December 15th 1995, the STCU held its very first meeting of its Board of Governors. Here 30 Ukrainian R&D projects were submitted by Ukrainian scientists formerly involved with weapons of mass destruction, were reviewed and 12 approved for financing (an abnormally high success proportion of 43%). In addition, a special Canadian project designed to support Ukrainian scientists to work and collaborate with Canadian organizations was also approved. Total project funding was US\$1,700,000.

It was at this point that the Ukrainian bureaucratic and scientific community realized that the STCU was for real, that it was there to fund them and their projects, and not simply fund Western consultants to tell Ukrainians what to do, as is common with many aid projects! Until then, most people dealing with the STCU were quite skeptical, indeed cynical, about its mission. Today, they realize it is on their side, that it actually wants to help them help themselves. In fact they have realized that its entire establishment is really a service



Prof. Ostap Hawaleshka

organization designed not to hinder their activities but to help them to achieve the best chance possible in having their project approved and financed. Realizing that such an organization actually exists is a quite a novel experience for the Ukrainian scientists.

The second Board meeting in May 1996, reviewed 62 additional projects and approved an incredible 37 of them! An unheard-of 60% success ratio! Many comments were heard regarding the extremely high caliber of the Ukrainian R&D proposals that had been submitted. This is particularly notable because their scientific reviews and evaluations was done by normal Western procedures and strict international peer review in each donor country independently. This proves to the Ukrainian scientists there is no reason to fear exposure of their scientific capabilities to the judgement of an international forum of their peers. The funding approved, including a Swedish cooperation-travel grant, was for US\$4,400,000.

By this time, the STCU had managed to have 50 R&D projects, out of 92 sent out for donor country reviews (an amazing 54% success ratio) approved, for a total of US\$6,100,000. This funding will support nearly 1000 high caliber Ukrainian scientists on research and development projects directed towards peaceful uses.

The STCU is thus clearly fulfilling its mandate and delivering vital assistance in the scientific field where, at the moment, there is essentially no real funding available in Ukraine. Most Ukrainian scientists, with nominal average salaries not exceeding \$100/month, haven't been paid in months (some from February/ 96). Hence, the average STCU grant support of about \$300/month to an individual STCU project scientist, becomes an extraordinarily important element in maintaining Ukrainian scientists in Ukraine, converting them to peaceful and market-oriented activities and to