

## Director's Corner

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Barry Barish

### A New Year

Greetings and best wishes for the New Year! We all greet each New Year with hopes, dreams and anticipation of things to come. As we all know, this was just not the case for the ILC community as we entered 2008 a year ago. In fact, at that time, we were reeling from funding news we had received from the US and UK that put the Global Design Effort and ILC into a time of crisis. It isn't an exaggeration to say it wasn't even clear at that time if the ILC effort would survive, but indeed we did survive, and to the surprise of many, we even accomplished a lot. Our 2008 accomplishments were nicely reviewed by Nick Walker in the final [Director's Corner](#) of last year.

I am happy to report that we are starting this year in a much more stable state and with a solid and realistic R&D plan that we believe we can accomplish. It will move us forward towards being ready to make a successful proposal for ILC construction by the end of our current technical design phase, meaning around 2012. I will discuss many of the details of that programme in future columns, but today I cover a less technical, but equally important subject matter. In order for us to make a successful proposal for the ILC, we will need to be able to make the right arguments to the governments of our collaborating countries for their participation in this large ambitious project. In order to do that we must understand the social and governmental contexts of proposing the project in each country.

In addition to producing a solid technical design for the ILC, making the case will involve dealing with funding issues, site selection, international governance and an implementation plan for construction. These plans will need to be well matched to the desires and abilities of our collaborating countries and we are initiating efforts in all these areas.

There is yet another issue we need to understand very well and address if we are to successfully propose a very large and costly international project like the ILC. How will our proposal for the ILC match the desires, goals and priorities of the participating countries? For example, we are presently undergoing a worldwide financial crisis and many of our governments will be investing in economic recovery programmes. How should technology and basic science fit into such programmes, and in particular what role can and should large international projects like the ILC play?

Many of these questions were being considered in the US well before the subprime loan crisis and subsequent financial meltdown. More than a year ago, President Bush introduced a plan for investment in science and technology which was followed by a Congressional bill called the "America Competes Act." The purpose of this Act was to invest in science and technology, such that the US will be competitive especially economically, in both the short and long term. I participated in a summit meeting at Oak Ridge in association with the America Competes Act and I wrote generally about that meeting in an earlier [column](#).

Now we have elected a new US President, Barack Obama, who will be inaugurated later this month. I fully expect similar themes will soon be revisited by the new administration, as part of their economic recovery plan. I also expect that this administration will have a stronger emphasis and regard for science, based on the science policy appointments already announced, and we must be prepared to quickly make the case for investing in "our" kind of science.



Putting one stone on top of the other: the ILC community is looking forward to the new year. (This picture was taken on new year's day at the Baltic coast).

A very important issue will involve answering the question of how international collaborations fit into investment plans that are strongly based on national goals. We are dedicating this issue to publishing the paper I contributed to this summit meeting on international collaboration, where I make the case that international science is inevitable for tackling the most important frontiers.

I will be addressing science policy questions further (and not just for the US) in future columns. We must both understand existing trends in science policy worldwide and interact and, in fact, convince our governments that science policy that values basic science and international collaboration will be a very effective way to advance societies at home and worldwide.

-- *Barry Barish*