

Curriculum Vitae – Amb. V. Ashok

Summary

I graduated in Civil Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi in 1981. I was selected to the prestigious Indian Foreign Service in 1982 and held diplomatic assignments in Indian Missions in Hong Kong, Malaysia, China, Austria, and Sri Lanka apart from postings at the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi. I was Director (External Relations) at the Department of Atomic Energy, Mumbai and was subsequently posted as Alternate Governor and Alternate Permanent Representative of India to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, Austria. I was Division Chief (Joint Secretary) in charge of SAARC and Central Europe Divisions in the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi. I was accredited as India's Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe in 2007 and as India's Ambassador to the Czech Republic in 2011. I was appointed Consul General of India, San Francisco, in 2014. I retired from government service in October 2018 with the rank of Secretary to the Government of India. I am currently Senior Advisor and Fellow at the Garwood Center for Corporate Innovation, Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley.

Experience

- Third Secretary(Language Training), Hong Kong; Studied Chinese language for two years (1984-85) at the Chinese University in Hong Kong to acquire proficiency in spoken, reading and written Chinese (Mandarin); also Vice Consul/Consul at Commission of India, Hong Kong (1984-86);
- Under Secretary at the Pakistan Desk in the Ministry of External Affairs; Programme Director, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (1986-1988);
- First Secretary (Information & Culture), High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur (1988-1991);
- First Secretary (Political), Embassy of India, Beijing (1991-94); was a member of the Special Expert Group on the India-China border;
- Deputy Secretary at China Desk in Delhi; was part of team that opened the India Taipei Association Office in Taipei, Taiwan;

- Director (External Relations), Department of Atomic Energy (1995-1998), including during the 5 nuclear tests in 1998 --- Pokharan II; managed the diplomatic fallout as India's Alternate Governor and Alternate Permanent Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna, Austria (1998-2001);
- Minister (Economic and Commercial), High Commission (2001-2004) --- Managed the operations of the bilateral Free Trade Agreement and oversaw the increase of trade from USD 675 million to over USD 2 billion; also managed credit line for USD 160 million for Indian goods and grain supply;
- Joint Secretary (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation), MEA, New Delhi; Joint Secretary (Central Europe) responsible for India's bilateral relations with 30 countries of Europe including the Vatican;
- Ambassador of India to the Republic of Zimbabwe (2008-2011) --- during a period of extreme hyperinflation; successfully launched USD 5 million Industrial Training Centre in Zimbabwe;
- Ambassador of India to the Czech Republic (2011-2014) --- oversaw successful expansion of political, commercial, cultural and educational ties between Czech Republic and India;
- Consul General of India, San Francisco (2014-2018), with jurisdiction over 11 states and one Federal Territory in the Western Region of the USA with 1.3 million persons of Indian origin. Had extensive interaction with Indian and foreign CEOs and Venture Capitalists in Silicon Valley; oversaw visit of PM Narendra Modi to West Coast in September 2015.
- Since 2015 I have been involved with Prof Solomon Darwin first in Smart Cities and then in Smart Villages in India (Andhra Pradesh). I have lectured at UC Berkeley Haas School of Business on Smart Villages to Prof Darwin's class. I also was keynote speaker at all the three US-India Forums in UC Berkeley since 2016. I was also keynote speaker at the Berkeley Innovation Forum in Vijayawada where CM Chandrababu Naidu was the Chief Guest. I continue to be associated with UCB activities including a proposed Berkeley-India-IITD Forum at IITD in March 2019. On retirement, UCB appointed me as Senior Advisor and Fellow of the Garwood Center for Corporate Innovation, Haas School of Business, UCB for a period of two years with the remit

of managing UCB Smart Village Programs in Arunachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. Other State Govts including Meghalaya and UP have expressed an interest in pursuing similar programs and UCB is going to include these once the Arunachal program acquires traction. As Senior Advisor and Fellow at UC Berkeley, I am expected to help identify research topics of interest to practitioners to expand markets to India; identify technologies to enable rural communities in India access global markets; and engage with key government officials to accelerate innovation and investment in India.
