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Workshop Initiates Nanomaterials Roadmap

Experts from across the country gathered outside Baltimore on September 30-October 2 to identify key requirements for developing nanomaterials for use in manufacturing. The Chemical Industry Vision2020 Technology Partnership joined the National Nanotechnology Initiative and the U.S. Department of Energy in sponsoring the "Nanomaterials and the Chemical Industry: R&D Roadmap Workshop." Results will be used to attract and guide public and private investments in nanomaterial R&D, accelerating the delivery of benefits to U.S. manufacturing and society.

"If we can develop a wide variety of nano-scale building blocks and learn how to effect directed, hierarchical self-assembly, we can launch a second industrial revolution," said Jim Murday of the National Nanotechnology Initiative in his opening remarks. (Nano-scale is roughly four times the diameter of an atom.) More than 70 chemists, physicists, entrepreneurs, and others from industry, major universities, start-ups, national labs, and over a dozen Federal agencies participated in the workshop. The participants engaged in lively brainstorming activities in separate break-out groups to identify top R&D needs in the areas of nanomaterials, nanocomposites, ordered nanostructures, analytical tools, modeling, and manufacturing.

The workshop highlighted the diversity and magnitude of the tasks ahead, yet suggested a strong consensus on priorities for pre-competitive research needs. Participants expressed their convictions that completely new materials with novel properties can be developed with adequate funding of collaborative, interdisciplinary efforts. Current federal investments of more than \$700 million will need to be significantly increased and leveraged to achieve the ambitious technology targets mapped out during the workshop.

"A diverse range of R&D is required—from fundamental to applied—to develop nanomaterials for manufacturing," said Vision2020 Chair Jack Solomon, Director of Technology Assessment at Praxair, Inc. "Although there are still many unknowns, this workshop has shown that there is tremendous enthusiasm for delivering nanomaterial benefits to society in the near term." The Vision2020 Chemical Industry Partnership is a coalition of chemical companies committed to leveraging resources to accelerate innovation and technology development for a more sustainable future. The technology roadmap should be available for review by early 2003. Watch www.chemicalvision2020.org for more information.

Vision 2020 members include Air Products and Chemicals, BP, Cargill Inc., Ciba Specialty Chemicals, Degussa Corp., Dow Chemical, Dow Corning, E.I. du Pont de Nemours, General Electric, Millennium Chemicals, Praxair, Inc., Rohm & Haas, the American Chemical Society, American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Council for Chemical Research, and the Materials Technology Institute.