

# Mukesh Aghi, President of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum

## Named Recipient of the South Asian Studies Association's

### *2018 Exemplar Award for Business Leadership*



Dr. Mukesh Aghi  
President

US-INDIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FORUM

**Pasadena, California – March 5, 2018:** The South Asian Studies Association (SASA), an alliance of international scholars, academicians, business and civic leaders today announced that its *2018 Exemplar Award for Business Leadership* will be presented to Dr. Mukesh Aghi, President of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF). The announcement was made by Ken Silverman, SASA Chairman & CEO. Since 2007, SASA has annually given one *Exemplar Award* for Academic Achievement and one for Community Service. Dr. Aghi is the first recipient of an *Exemplar Award* in recognition of Business Leadership.

In making today's announcement, Mr. Silverman stated, "For the critical past half-decade, there is likely no individual on earth who has been more in the exact middle of the crossroads between U.S. and Indian cross-border business, trade, and investment than Mukesh Aghi. His work, and that of the organizations that he has led, have helped enormously to lift and grow the economic interests of business enterprises and government trade bodies in both countries." In acknowledging his selection, Dr. Aghi stated, "I have been aware of SASA and its excellent work in academia for quite some time. As their focus broadens, now embracing business, trade, and governance, I am delighted to accept their first-ever *Exemplar Award for Business Leadership*." The *Award* will be presented to Dr. Aghi at the *SASA 2018 Conference*, to be held at Claremont McKenna College, during the weekend of March 23-25, 2018.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the USISPF ([www.USISPF.org](http://www.USISPF.org)) is a leading bilateral trade organization which additionally focuses on promoting job creation, inclusion, start-ups, innovation, and education. Its core premise is that the most powerful strategic relationship between U.S. and India can best be achieved by business and government coming together to create meaningful opportunities that have the power to positively change the lives of citizens in both countries. The organization fosters dialogue and exchange between both countries' business and government leaders. It also forms and leads inter-country delegations across multiple industry sectors, engages in research and policy advocacy, and hosts senior-level gatherings to bring together leaders representing business and government in the U.S. and India. The USISPF Board of Directors includes leaders of preeminent corporations in both countries. In addition to Washington D.C., it has offices in New York, Silicon Valley, Mumbai and New Delhi.

Based in Pasadena, California, SASA ([www.SAsia.org](http://www.SAsia.org)) was founded in 2007, by university scholars engaged in this field of study. Its mission has been to build recognition and expansion of South Asian studies amongst universities and colleges worldwide. To date, SASA has presented 10 South Asia conferences across the U.S., in India, and once in Russia. It has published six authoritative books and five editions of the scholarly journal *Exemplar*, as well as producing multiple webcasts. Its annual *Exemplar Award* has been presented to distinguished individuals in academia and in fields of community service. Mr. Silverman, a SASA Board member virtually since its inception, and a veteran U.S.-India business professional, was elected Chairman in 2016. He is also Head of North America for Sannam S4 Group, the leading market-entry organization that brings U.S. corporations, universities, and nonprofits into India and establishes and supports their in-country operations.

Dr. Aghi is the USISPF's founding President. Prior to USISPF he served as President of the U.S.-India Business Council, one of the 25 country-specific and region-specific business councils and initiatives operated by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Previously he was CEO and a Board Member of LTI, the multinational information technology arm of India's giant Larsen & Toubro Group, and earlier was Chairman and CEO of the Asia-Pacific region for India's Steria, Inc. He was also the founding CEO of Universitas 21 Global, the world's largest consortium of research-led universities and global leader in providing post-graduate online education. Earlier, Dr. Aghi was President of IBM India.

Dr. Aghi holds several degrees, including an advanced management diploma from Harvard Business School, a Ph.D. in International Relations from Claremont Graduate University, an MBA in International Marketing from Andrews University, and a B.A. in business administration from the Middle East College, Beirut, Lebanon. He currently also serves as a trustee at Claremont Graduate University.

During the *SASA 2018* Conference at Claremont McKenna College, in addition to receiving the *Exemplar Award*, Dr. Aghi will engage in an on-stage Fireside Chat with Mr. Silverman, which will focus on Dr. Aghi's vast experience in the U.S.-India cross-border space and his unique perspectives on U.S.-India business and trade in 2018 and beyond. He will additionally speak during the Plenary Session entitled [US-India Higher Education & Entrepreneurship: Cross Border Alliances](#).

The 2018 SASA *Exemplar Award for Academic Achievement* will be presented to Dr. Christopher Chapple, Doshi Professor of India & Comparative Theology at Loyola Marymount University, and the 2018 SASA *Exemplar Award for Community Service* will be presented to Dr. Varun Soni, Dean of Religious Life at the University of Southern California (USC). The *SASA 2018 Conference* is made possible in part via grants from Pratima and Navin Doshi, and from Sannam S4 Group ([www.SannamS4.com](http://www.SannamS4.com)). Information about *SASA 2018* can be found on SASA's website, [www.SAsia.org](http://www.SAsia.org).

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