



Working for Your Future to Build a Sustainable Steel Industry



Sunday Abraham

Director Research and Development,
SSAB Iowa Inc.

My journey into the steel industry began in Nigeria, where I was born and grew up. In the late 1970s, after a decade-long feasibility study conducted by Russian (Soviet) experts in Nigeria, a suitable iron ore deposit for the production of steel was discovered in my state of origin. This resulted in the Nigerian government kickstarting a steel company, Ajaokuta Steel Co. Ltd. (ASCL), which was intended to be the bedrock of the country's Industrial Revolution in 1979. It was an exciting time, and many young people, including me, were recruited in the early 1980s by the government to work with the Soviet company (Tyazhpromexport) and other foreign companies contracted to build an integrated steel mill.

Working at this company presented a scholarship opportunity for higher education in the Soviet Union, and after nine months of work, I was awarded a scholarship in 1986 to study metallurgy.

I studied at the Moscow State Institute of Steel and Alloys, which has been renamed the National University of Science and Technology, where I earned my B.Sc., M.Sc., and Ph.D. degrees in metallurgy.

In 1999, I immigrated to Canada, and shortly after my arrival, I joined IPSCO's Research and Development facility in Regina, Saskatchewan. Working at IPSCO presented a unique opportunity for me to apply my fundamental knowledge of metallurgy to solve practical steelmaking problems. My initial focus was on development practices for reducing hydrogen and nitrogen levels in steel, which are critical for the mill operational stability and structural integrity of finished products. Given the success I had with these projects, I was eager to find an academic forum where I could share and discuss various practical and technical challenges in the steel industry. In 2005, when I first attended AISTech and became a member of AIST, I discovered that AIST provided the ideal platform for me to develop as a metallurgist. Over the years, I have served on several technology committees, including the Ladle & Secondary Refining Technology Committee (LSRTC) and the Metallurgy — Steelmaking & Casting Technology Committee (MSCTC). I have served as chair of the LSRTC and am currently serving my second year as chair of the MSCTC. Members of the MSCTC identify common problems in the steel industry and develop innovative solutions to address these issues. Participating in generating solutions through brainstorming in committee meetings has had a positive impact on my current role as director of research and development at SSAB Americas.

In general, joining AIST committees is rewarding in many ways, some of which include:

1. Engagement with peers on technical discussions.
2. Access to new technologies for the steel industry.
3. Knowledge development.
4. Professional networking.
5. Leadership skill enhancement.

There are so many exciting developments in the steel industry nowadays. These include digitalization, application of AI, and decarbonization, and AIST has Technology Committees in these areas. It is an exciting time to join AIST Technology Committees and participate in finding solutions to current and future challenges in the steel industry. ◆

Interested in joining one of AIST's 29 Technology Committees?

Contact Anna Voss at +1.724.814.3097, avoss@aist.org or visit AIST.org.