

Obituary for Anver Ghazi (1940-2005)

On the 25th of July our dear colleague Dr. Anver Ghazi died after a painful battle with cancer. We lost a good friend, scientist, and administrator.

Anver Ghazi was born in India on March 7, 1940. At the age of 17 he moved to Quetta, Pakistan and then a year later to Paris in 1958, where he joined his uncle, the internationally well-known atmospheric scientist Ichtiaque Rasool. He got his scientific training at the University of Cologne, Germany under K.H. Paetzold, and became Doctor of Natural Sciences in 1968. His early research was concerned with total ozone variability using sky radiation. In 1974 he published one of the early papers relating changes in total ozone and stratospheric temperatures during a sudden warming, using information obtained from the Nimbus-4 satellite.

In the early 1970s, when I got to know him, Anver Ghazi also did research at several leading institutes in the U.S., but his heart was in Europe. He obtained the German nationality and joined the European Commission in 1980 as a principal scientific officer. For all those years, until his untimely death this year, Anver Ghazi played a key role in organizing European research in climatology and natural hazards. Anver Ghazi thus became a true European and was much respected by colleagues in the Commission and scientists for his work as Head of Unit in the Directorate General for Research and the Joint Research Centre in the research areas of space and the environment. He was effective, maybe especially because in his heart he remained a scientist.

Anver officially retired from the E.C. last year, but his advice was so valuable that he was asked to help in the organization of the highly important Earth Observation Summit in Brussels, which was held on February 16 this year. He was already very ill at that time, but, nevertheless, attended.

Last time I met with Anver Ghazi was in June last year where he opened the Quadrennial Ozone Symposium on the island of Kos, Greece. He attended most of the time and was accompanied by his wife Renate. There was for us no sign of a serious illness. His and my wife spent much time together. She told about their early difficult years together, when love conquered religious and cultural obstacles.

We wish her and the Ghazi family much strength in overcoming the loss of such a great and sympathetic human being.

Paul J. Crutzen
Mainz, October 25, 2005