

# **DECLARATION OF THE TENTH WORLD SCIENCE FORUM**

*Science for Social Justice*

Text adopted on 9 December 2022, Cape Town, South Africa

## **Preamble**

*With the encouragement and support of the partner organisations of the World Science Forum, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Science Council (ISC), the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), The World Academy of Sciences for the advancement of science in developing countries (TWAS), the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP), and the European Academies' Science Advisory Council (EASAC), as well as of our host, the South African Department of Science and Innovation, we, the participants of the 10th World Science Forum, held from 6 to 9 December 2022 in Cape Town, South Africa, adopt the present declaration.*

*World Science Forum (WSF), an outcome of the 1999 World Conference on Science, is a biennial event that since 2003 has been successfully assembling scientists, policymakers, industry leaders, civil society and the media to discuss the role of science in meeting global challenges.*

*In line with the recommendations of the 1999 World Conference on Science (WCS) and the Use of Scientific Knowledge, and taking into account the 2011 Budapest Declaration on the New Era of Global Science, the 2013 Rio de Janeiro Declaration on Science for Global Sustainable Development, the 2015 Budapest Declaration on The Enabling Power of Science, the 2017 Jordan Declaration on Science for Peace and the 2019 Budapest Declaration on Science, Ethics and Responsibility, we reaffirm our commitment to the rigorous and ethical conduct of scientific research and the free and responsible use of scientific knowledge for sustainable development to the benefit of all humanity.*

**Science for Social Justice – a responsibility, an opportunity and a commitment**

With humanity being confronted by key global challenges such as pandemic disease, climate change, food insecurity, biodiversity

loss, conflict, migration and persistent poverty, science more than ever is called upon to make a critical contribution to create a more equal, fair and just world and to set an ambitious agenda to ensure a better future for generations to come. This call for action informed the choice of “Science for Social Justice” as theme for the WSF 2022, a *responsibility* for all concerned with and involved in the scientific enterprise.

Social injustice is a major cause of global insecurity, as evidenced by increased geopolitical conflict and tension, and strained international solidarity. Increasing scourges of our society, such as wide-spread violence, loss of social mobility, exploitation of various social groups, discrimination and exclusion, including mental health challenges for many, have their roots in social injustice. Science must assume a greater role in addressing and reversing these damaging dynamics and do so through an intersectional lens.

Discussion at the Forum identified several possibilities for science to play a more decisive role in ensuring resources, opportunities and benefits in society are accessible and are distributed in a fair manner. This Declaration sets out the *commitment* by Forum participants to meet this *responsibility* and seize the *opportunity* for the production and application of knowledge to challenge

inequality, marginalization, environmental destruction, climatic disruptions and other forms of social injustice.

*We therefore commit for our actions to be guided by the values of Ubuntu that is respecting the universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity, as well as by human rights principles and standards, and to working together to harness the power of science to achieve the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which underpin social justice.*

*We also undertake in our respective spheres of influence and responsibility, for our policy- and decision-making with regard to the advancement of social justice, to be guided and informed by robust scientific data, evidence and advice.*

*We will prioritize efforts to support the translation of research results, through both technological and social innovation, to be applied for the benefit of all of society in support of social justice.*

*We will safeguard, nourish and promote the unique ability of science to inspire progress, to foster tolerance, to unite, and to care for the vulnerable, through concerted public engagement and communication actions, building awareness and understanding of the role of science in support of social justice.*

## **1. Science for human dignity - What role for science in fighting poverty, unemployment, inequality and exclusion?**

All individuals and groups have the right to be respected and hold a special value tied solely to their humanity. Human dignity across our world is diminished by poor socio-economic conditions denying opportunity and increasing exclusion.

*We call for science funding agencies to foster a step change towards interdisciplinary, multiscale and inclusive research agendas informing pathways to greater equality, and to develop a global science agenda concertedly focused on poverty alleviation. We commit our efforts to support it.*

*We acknowledge the important role of science in ensuring advanced technologies create new opportunities and do not marginalize anyone.*

*We underscore the importance of ethical scientific endeavors and will strive for our actions to be informed by international agreements such as the Recommendation on*

*the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence of UNESCO that aims at guiding technological developments to deliver inclusive, sustainable and fair outcomes.*

*We call for increased investment in education and science, recognizing that basic science, as celebrated by the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development, constitutes the foundations of future innovations, economic prosperity, and societies strengthened by solidarity and democracy.*

*We call for renewed support for the social sciences and humanities, as these disciplines play a vital role in understanding societal challenges, including the role of harm reduction science, which informs greater empathy for people with addictions, helping us to shape a more equal and inclusive world.*

## **2. Science for climate justice - How can science working with civil society lead the way in correcting the failure of climate policy?**

The 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) re-emphasized the urgency for science to deliver for our planet

and all its people in supporting climate action. We agree with the conclusion of the IAP Communiqué on Global Green Recovery that at this unprecedented inflection point, we need to seek low-carbon socioeconomic pathways to protect and promote human health and enhance the prospects for an equitable recovery compatible with the commitments in the Paris Climate Agreement. Indeed, it is clear that tackling climate change can provide health co-benefits for all as evidenced in the report of the IAP on Health in the Climate Emergency: A global perspective. Our world requires a deliberate and renewed partnership between science and civil society, ensuring a science agenda that will enable a just transition. Science must be at the heart of a transformative mitigation and adaptation agenda, with particular emphasis on the needs of developing countries and underprivileged communities that are most vulnerable. This will require a closer and more productive partnership between the natural sciences and social sciences and the humanities. The science community must ensure that scientific research, modelling and innovation are featured prominently in discussions on investment to combat and mitigate climate change, particularly with regard to loss and

damage budgets, so that the voice of science is not lost to political and economic interests.

*We call for the reinforcement of the participation of civil society in the shaping of the global science agenda for climate justice, which will ensure the representation, inclusion, and protection of the rights of those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.*

*We commit to the principles enshrined in the UNESCO Declaration on the Ethics of Climate Change.*

*We urge investment in scientific solutions that promote equity, assure access to basic resources, and ensure that future generations can live, learn, play and work in healthy and clean environments. In this regard, we recognize the recommendations of the IAP Report on Global Health Inequalities: Research for a fairer future.*

*We acknowledge the importance of support for technology transfer to, skills development in, and scientific collaboration with developing countries, in support of climate action.*

*We are cognizant that what we need for advancing a just climate transition, is knowledge about values, decision-*



*making, behavioral change, underpinned not only by the natural sciences and technology, but also by strong support for the social and human sciences.*

*We recognise that our children will bear the brunt of climate breakdown, ecosystem collapse and the ravages of forced migration, we therefore commit to putting the best interests of future generations at the very centre of our science, policy, research programmes and social justice agenda.*

### **3. Science for Africa and the world - How to unleash the potential of African science in global cooperation?**

At the national, regional and continental levels, an African agenda for science, technology and innovation to respond to social justice is emerging. This is also a resource for the world, as responding decisively to global challenges requires an inclusive global response. The full and effective participation by African scientists and by other developing country scientists in global science is therefore an imperative.

*We call for global science programmes, including in frontier sciences and those traditionally dominated by developed*

*countries, to be more inclusive, and for those framework conditions, which may discourage the active participation of especially African scientists, to be addressed.*

*We acknowledge and celebrate the excellence and achievements of African science as a resource for humanity. We recognize that more could be done by African and other developing-world nations to support science, including by accelerating their efforts to achieve their own commitments to increase investment in science, technology and innovation.*

*We support continued investment in capacity-building programmes for African science, including research infrastructure partnerships, researcher mobility and training schemes, and other cooperation instruments.*

*We support the creation of pan-African technological innovation hubs to cooperate with other research organisations, to foster inclusive and sustainable research practices effectively addressing the needs of civil society.*

*We call for international collaboration schemes that make sure that investment made in science by developing countries, with special emphasis on the training of*

*researchers is preserved and shall not become unwarranted by alarming trends of brain drain.*

#### **4. Science for diplomacy - How can science reboot multilateralism and global solidarity?**

Science diplomacy is a valuable instrument to bring nations and people together, focusing attention on our shared challenges, which can only be addressed by our joint efforts, surpassing political differences. With multilateralism under threat and global insecurity contributing to increased polarization, the investment in international science collaboration, enabled by multilateral programmes and other partnerships, is more important than ever.

*We acknowledge the importance of science diplomacy as an instrument for peace, and call for the values of science, to inspire a greater commitment to global collaboration and solidarity.*

*We urge the global science diplomacy community to enshrine continuity in its internal and external engagement structures and to ensure that changing political and*

*multilateral environments do not hamper its ability to communicate and advise.*

*We call for investment in researcher mobility programmes, especially for young scientists, to build people-to-people relations as a response to increased geopolitical tension and insecurity.*

*We call for the reinforcement of the role of science as enabler for collaboration within multilateral programmes, and to strengthen especially the institutions of the United Nations and their role in these.*

## **5. Justice in science - How to ensure science reflects the society we want?**

Science should not only advance social justice it should be inspired and identified by the values of social justice, such as greater transparency and inclusivity. This will require a renewed commitment to Open Science and research integrity. Working to renew improve the scientific enterprise will also transform society and advance humanity.

*We recognize the need for the scientific enterprise to evolve to make it more responsive to the needs of society, without*

*neglecting our commitment to invest in the basic sciences, as an investment in the future*

*We reaffirm our determination to advance science as a global public good, and accept our mutual responsibility to ensure the free and responsible conduct of science.*

*We call for greater inclusivity in science, systematic and concerted efforts to eliminate gender and racial imbalances in the scientific enterprise and remedies for exclusion which denies opportunities for full participation in science.*

*We also urge for concrete and impactful actions that contribute to reducing the gender gap in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.*

*We recognize the crucial role of early career scientists in advancing science for social justice and therefore call for enhanced support for their career development and engagement in science policymaking, including through support for the Global Young Academy and national young academies.*

*We stress the importance of the UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers, which promotes human rights, inclusivity, freedom and responsibility in science to guide the response to this Declaration.*

*We acknowledge the importance of the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science and call for support for its implementation especially to advance the objectives related to Open Access and Open Data.*

*We accept our mutual responsibility to ensure integrity and respect for the ethical conduct of science.*

*We commit to respond decisively to the “Science for Social Justice” Call to Action as set out in this Declaration.*