

Presidential Communiqué Q4/2021

23 NOVEMBER 2021

Dear ISC Members,

It is just over a month since the [2nd ISC General Assembly](#), and I would like to take this opportunity to initiate direct communication with you on a quarterly basis via a presidential communiqué.

As this is the beginning of a new presidency, please [register](#) and join me for a “Meet the President” Zoom session in the new year on:

1. Wednesday, 26 January 2022, 08:00 UTC or
2. Thursday, 27 January 2022, 17:00 UTC

The inaugural Governing Board under the leadership of Daya Reddy left the ISC in a good position to accelerate its impact and profile. I feel honoured to have worked with Daya and the previous Board to get the ISC to this position. Daya, Heide Hackmann, Board members and the ISC Secretariat all must be enthusiastically acknowledged for what they have achieved in the first three years.

The new Board is rapidly settling in, and we have already had the chance for an informal meeting. Our first official meeting will take place at the beginning of December, at which we will think through how best to organize our governance and strategic responsibilities to ensure maximum impact. This will mean establishing several working groups to energize the [2022–2024 Action Plan](#) approved at the General Assembly, as well as elevating the

position of the ISC in the global sphere. We will be reaching out to you over the next two months for recommendations for members of these working groups, for which we will be looking for experts with various specialized backgrounds and geographical spread, in order to engage our membership more effectively.

We know that the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, inadequate progress on the 2030 Sustainability Agenda and climate change, growing societal concerns about inequality and social cohesion, and the opportunities and challenges presented by evolving technologies make the need for science to be engaged more acute than ever.

In that regard the ISC as the global voice for science must continue to work to elevate its profile and impact, particularly in the multilateral space and in the global science community. The ISC’s recent position paper on [Science as a Global Public Good](#) and the soon-to-be-released report from the [Steering Group advising the ISC on its strategy in the intergovernmental system](#) are timely. I urge you to read them. We will be working with you, our Members, to increase the visibility and knowledge of the ISC among the global scientific community.

Positioning the ISC as the recognized global voice for science ultimately means additional

resources, and the new Board is making fundraising a priority. We must increase our resources, while decreasing the reliance on membership dues, so we can expand our capacity and speak to our vision as the global voice for science.

At the General Assembly we heard of requests and suggestions for how the ISC can assist its Members to be more impactful, and the Board will be discussing ways to take this forward in the first half of 2022. I hope to be more specific in the new year.

The issue of membership dues and how it relates to voting remains to be solved. I hope this can be achieved in the next few months, and it would likely need an extraordinary General Assembly in late 2022 to agree if a solution can be found. Similarly, there is work to do on our regional strategy.

The approved Action Plan supported the creation of an ISC fellowship programme to expand its effective profile and reach, and to recognize individuals who have promoted science for the global public good. One of the Board's early actions will be to develop this concept.

In the next few weeks, we will formally announce the establishment of a global commission on Science Missions for Sustainability co-chaired by Ms Helen Clark and Ms Irina Bokova. We have had an extraordinary level of support from global leaders in science, politics, diplomacy,

philanthropy and business to establish this commission.

Early next year we will release the first part of the COVID-19 Outcomes Scenarios Report, which focuses on the possible scenarios for medium- and long-term outcomes of the pandemic. Following this, we will release a companion report, which will focus on the policy implications and lessons learned.

COVID-19 and its consequences have not lessened the energy and commitment of the ISC Secretariat – they have done an outstanding job through lockdowns and working from home. Similarly, the Board has learned to meet electronically and will continue to do so. As we approach 2022, I wish you and your members all the best for the coming year. Let us use the next twelve months to collectively augment the impact of science for the global public good, and to assist in enhancing the stewardship of the peoples, biota and environment in which we live.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to robust science across all its disciplines.



Peter Gluckman
ISC President

peter.gluckman@council.science