



Health as the Cornerstone of Global Prosperity

Global health as key issue of the 61st Lindau Meeting/ Bill Gates to attend opening ceremony in Lindau

Between 26 June and 1 July, 570 young scientists and 24 Nobel Laureates will be assembling at Lake Constance to discuss advances in medical research, absorb fresh inspiration and make contacts. With participants from 80 countries, this year's Lindau Meeting of Nobel Laureates is more international than ever. Many of the young scientists are coming from developing countries where disease is rife - all the more reason, then, to link the Meeting for the first time with a theme "Global Health".

The young researchers coming to Lindau will also meet Harald zur Hausen who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 2008 for his work in identifying human papilloma virus (HPV) as the cause of cervical cancer. The developing countries account for 80 percent of the women who die each year from cervical cancer. Harald zur Hausen is committed to preventing this type of cancer in these regions: "In pilot projects conducted by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), for example in Tanzania, we have initiated HPV vaccination programmes in coordination with the local health authorities."

Microsoft founder Bill Gates will also attend the opening of the 61st Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Lindau (June 26 at 3.00pm/CET). The Foundation Lindau Nobelprizewinners Meetings at Lake Constance will induct him as member of its Honorary Senate. As part of the opening event, Bill Gates will conduct a podium discussion with the young scientists. Bill and Melinda Gates have been supporting global health projects since 1994. "I believe we have the opportunity to make a new future in which global health is the cornerstone of global prosperity," said Mr Gates recently in explaining his commitment. The Nobel Laureate Meeting concludes on the Island of Mainau with another podium

Datum | Date
16 June 2011

www.lindau-nobel.org

(Website with programme of the meeting))

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Lindau Nobel Laureate
Meetings

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discussion between five prominent representatives of science and politics, which will also focus on global health.

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Breaking the vicious circle of poverty and disease

It is predominantly the populations of the developing countries that are at risk of contracting infectious diseases such as malaria, AIDS and tuberculosis. More than a billion people in these regions are also affected by tropical diseases associated with poverty including river blindness, sleeping sickness and dengue fever, which are predominantly caused by parasites. The occurrence of these diseases in the developed world is negligible, which is why efforts to combat them have long been neglected.

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Following the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, however, the realization slowly began to prevail that sustainable development is only possible provided that we are successful in breaking the vicious circle of poverty and disease in emerging nations. Enabling the inhabitants of these regions to access basic medical care has become a global political priority that was confirmed among the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in the year 2000. Under the leadership of the WHO, numerous public-private partnerships have been formed in which governments, NGOs, international authorities, private foundations and pharmaceutical companies have joined forces to specifically combat the tropical diseases fostered by poverty. In 2008 almost 670 million people were treated with drugs to address these once neglected illnesses. The WHO nurtures the hope that by 2020 some of these diseases will have been eliminated entirely.

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Concentrated aid brings initial successes

This international cooperation is also having an effect in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria: in the past decade, the number of cases of HIV infections and the number of deaths from AIDS have declined by around 20 percent. However, for every two patients that are treated, there are still five new cases of infection. Around 63 percent of all those affected in sub-Saharan

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Press Release
61st Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Lindau (Germany)



Africa still have no access to medication. And the majority of young people in the developing countries still do not know enough about AIDS to protect themselves from it.

One in four deaths among immunodeficient AIDS sufferers is due to tuberculosis, which has become particularly dangerous with the emergence of multi-resistant pathogens in the developing nations. Despite this, by 2008 some 86 percent of all tuberculosis patients were treated successfully.

In 25 countries the number of malaria cases has halved since the year 2000. On the one hand, this is due to the protection afforded by impregnated mosquito nets – 289 million of which have been distributed in sub-Saharan Africa alone – and the use of insect sprays in the home. On the other, it is also attributable to improved diagnosis and drug treatments. There are high hopes of a possible protective vaccination against malaria. An initial vaccine is now undergoing clinical trials. If these prove positive, it should be available by 2015.

Decade of Vaccines

The Gates Foundation has been involved in the development of this vaccine. In the year 2000 the Foundation donated 750 million US dollars to support the establishment of the Global Alliance for Vaccines und Immunization (GAVI). Last Monday (13 June) it announced to donate another one billion US dollars to GAVI. This public-private partnership has set itself the goal of providing every child in the developing countries with access to the vaccinations that their contemporaries in the developed world take for granted. The partnership supports developing countries in their negotiations with vaccine manufacturers and promotes the development of new vaccines against pneumonia, meningitis and diarrheal diseases. A year ago, at the Davos Economic Forum, Bill Gates proclaimed a “Decade of Vaccines” and pledged his Foundation to invest ten billion US dollars by 2020 in researching, developing and distributing vaccines: “They are the most effective and cost-effective health tool ever invented.”

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The danger of non-transferable diseases is growing

Harald zur Hausen is one of those taking part in the discussion on the outlook for global health, which rounds off the Nobel Laureate Meeting (Friday, July 1/ 11.00am, Isle of Mainau). He will be joined by Unni Karunakara, President of the international aid organisation "Médecins Sans Frontières", which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999; Hans Rosling, Professor of International Health at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm; James W. Vaupel, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research in Rostock, and Georg Schütte, Secretary of State at the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. These five experts will also consider the increasing threat to global health posed by non-transferable diseases, the bulk of which are avoidable insofar as they are often the product of an unhealthy lifestyle. These include cardiovascular diseases, chronic lung diseases, cancer and diabetes. Already these account for almost two thirds of deaths worldwide. And in a trend in which the developing countries are hardest hit, their frequency is increasing. The WHO is therefore urgently calling for greater efforts to be made in education and prevention. For some countries already grappling with infectious diseases, WHO Director General Margaret Chan recently declared that the spread of these chronic non-transferable diseases constitutes "an impending disaster: a disaster for health, for society, and most of all for national economies."

Original quotes:

"I believe we have the opportunity to make a new future in which global health is the cornerstone of global prosperity." (Bill Gates, 17 May 2011)

"They are the most effective and cost-effective health tool ever invented." (Gates Foundation, 2011 Annual Letter from Bill Gates, page 9)

"For some countries, it is no exaggeration to describe the situation as an impending disaster; a disaster for health, for society, and most of all for national economies." (Margaret Chan, 27 April 2011)

Opening Ceremony and Accreditation:

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Press Release |
61st Meeting of Nobel Laureates in Lindau (Germany)



The opening ceremony takes place on June 26, 2011 at 3.00pm /CET at the Inselhalle at Lindau/Germany. It will be streamed live on www.lindau-nobel.org. If you like to register for the opening ceremony/ the meeting please go to: <http://www.lindau-nobel.org/Accreditation.AxCMS?ActiveID=1224>

Programme:

Programme of the 61st Lindau Meeting: <http://tinyurl.com/3gadrpu>

Abstract of the lecture „Infections in the Etiology of Human Cancers“ by Nobel Laureate Harald zur Hausen: <http://tinyurl.com/6bd9gdq>

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