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Note: The documents presented hereafter (the Declaration and the Conclusions) are the official translations of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia

We, the scientists gathered at the First Congress of Croatian Scientists from Croatia and Abroad held in the capital city of Zagreb and in the town of Vukovar which, through its suffering, has become the symbol of Croatian destiny and struggle for freedom,

Aware of the challenges of the present moment when the Republic of Croatia, as a free and democratic country, is on its way to becoming a full member of the European Union,

Aware of the role of science and education in that process,

Believing that Croatia can develop economically, culturally and politically only by respecting human rights and freedoms, upholding the rule of law and fostering knowledge and education,

Considering the responsibility of scientists for the development of the Republic of Croatia,

We, therefore, the Croatian scientists from Croatia and abroad, adopt the following

Declaration

1. The aim of the Congress of Croatian Scientists from Croatia and Abroad, organized by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia, which has brought us together from all over the world, is

- to affirm and give witness to our belief that of all types of investment in the development of any country, and thus also of our homeland Croatia, the most valuable and the most rewarding is the investment in people, especially in young people, and particularly in their education and learning,
- to demonstrate by our presence how much Croatia has given to the world by educating her scientists who later went abroad searching for more favorable working conditions, and to transform the "brain drain", which is simultaneously one of the greatest dangers for countries like Croatia as well as one of the greatest gifts that a country can give to the world, from an ailment into a remedy for our homeland, and through our cooperation as Croatian scientists from abroad and from Croatia, to let the world return to Croatia the same gift of support, in expertise and in kind, for the development of science in Croatia and for the overall development of the country, for which the investment in human capital and in education is a crucial precondition.

2. The development and prosperity of a country are based on the promotion of freedom and democracy on the one hand, and on its economic and technological development on the other. None of these things are achievable without knowledge and science. Science forms the basis of today's rapid development of technology, which in turn is the precondition for economic development. Thus the natural, medical, technical and information sciences play a crucial role in all modern economies. But the social sciences and humanities are equally important for the constitution of a modern society, particularly when it comes to preserving and developing a country's cultural identity and the achievements of modern civilization.

Political responsibility must be based on the sovereignty of peoples and citizens, expressed through their political institutions, and in a democratic country it cannot be supplanted by scientific expertise. The will of the people and their representatives must be based on reliable information about the options available for solving the problems of the modern world, in which respect science plays a major advisory role. Although a strong link between science and the economy is a precondition for both economic and scientific development, science should never become a mere instrument in the service of the economy, striving instead to preserve its autonomy, since almost all great discoveries have

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served the quest for knowledge first, and found their effective and useful application later.

3. Bearing this in mind, and aware of the Republic of Croatia's need to develop fast and reach the standards of the developed world, we call on

The Institutions of the Republic of Croatia:

- the Croatian Parliament, elected by the free will of the Croatian citizens, to pass laws that will enable the closest and most effective cooperation possible between the Croatian scientists living abroad and those living in Croatia, and that will foster all other forms of international scientific cooperation we wish to promote,
- the Government of the Republic of Croatia to remove all obstacles to such cooperation and to secure the most favorable financial and other conditions for enabling scientific and other cooperation between the Croats at home and abroad,
- all the ministries to appoint individuals whom scientists from abroad and from Croatia, as well as other competent citizens, will be able to contact with suggestions for international scientific and related cooperation; and to set up information networks for discussions about such cooperation;

The Croatian scientists from abroad:

- to promote and develop cooperation with their homeland and its scientists, to propose joint international scientific and development projects, to pave the way for international financial support for such projects, and to assist in the education of young scientists from Croatia in the world,
- to disseminate information about Croatia in the world, to promote cooperation with Croatia, and to help raise public awareness about Croatian culture and identity in the cultures in which they live,
- to include scientists from Croatia in their projects, to help young Croatian scientists win grants and scholarships to study abroad, to participate in national projects and give lectures in Croatia, to provide peer-reviews of university programs and scientific projects and papers,
- to invite scientists from Croatia, and come to Croatia when invited to take part in professional, scientific and educational cooperation;

Scientists living in Croatia:

- to spare no effort to advance their respective scientific fields and strengthen cooperation with Croatian scientists living abroad as part of wider international scientific cooperation aimed at reaching highest international standards and at furthering Croatia's socio-economic development,
- to take great pains to develop, in cooperation with Croatian scientists abroad, a strategy aimed at promoting Croatian culture, language and identity in the world and at informing the international public about Croatia, by integrating their scientific activities into international scientific trends and networks of international cooperation in a way that will be to their credit, and valuable both for Croatia and the overall development of science.

4. Scientists' work should be assessed on the basis of the highest scientific criteria, taking into consideration the specificity of some scientific fields, in particular the national disciplines, as well as on the basis of ethical principles. Our activities are based on the autonomy of scientific organizations and of individual scientists, and are aimed at upholding tolerance, non-discrimination, human rights and freedoms, as well as the values of pluralistic democratic society.

5. We are considering various models aimed at promoting cooperation between Croatian scientists living abroad and those living in Croatia, such as those that would

- support the National Foundation for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development in the Republic of Croatia, which should be sponsored by the economic sector and which should, among other things, provide scholarships for young Croatian scientists to study abroad, and support projects carried out in cooperation with foreign partners,
- set up an information-exchange system which would provide information on the current supply and demand in scientific cooperation on all kinds of scientific projects,
- create a network providing information about the possibilities for international scientific cooperation between Croatia and the rest of the world,
- develop institutions aimed at promoting Croatian culture and, in particular, its science and art in the world,
- build up a network of Croatian language instructors, departments for the Croatian Language and Literature, and Croatian Studies departments,
- develop a strategy for cooperation aimed at promoting Croatian culture and identity in all the fields of humanities and other related disciplines.

We affirm our commitment to devote our constant effort to further this cooperation, to advance the development of science in Croatia and to help build a modern, democratic, European and internationally-recognized Croatia whose culture, science and prosperity will take an active and creative part in the life and progress of the international scientific community, on an equal footing with its other members.

Natural Sciences:

Professor Davor Pavuna, Ph.D.

Professor Vladimir Paar, Ph.D.

Technical Sciences:

Professor Ivica Crnković, Ph.D.

Professor Darko Stipančević, Ph.D.

Biomedicine and Health:

Professor Željko Bošnjak, Ph.D.

Professor Daniel Rukavina, Ph.D.

Social Sciences:

Professor Stjepan G. Meštrović, Ph.D.

Professor Ivo Josipović, Ph.D.

Humanities:

Professor Vladimir Goss, Ph.D.

Professor Mislav Ježić, Ph.D.

Biotechnical Sciences:

Professor Slavko Matić, Ph.D.

Professor Stanimir Vuk-Pavlović, Ph.D.

President of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts,

Professor Milan Moguš, Ph.D.

President of the Rectors' Conference

Professor Gordana Kralik, Ph.D.

Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Health and Social Welfare,

Professor Andrija Hebrang, M.D., Ph.D.

Minister of Science, Education and Sports,

Ass. Prof. Dragan Primorac, M.D., Ph.D.

Dated this nineteenth day of November, 2004, in Vukovar.