

**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ
HUMAN FRONTIER SCIENCE PROGRAM
INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE, BERLIN, 2002**

Paragraph 1

Representatives of the Governments of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and of the Commission of the European Communities (hereinafter referred to as “the representatives”), constituting the Management Support Parties (MSPs) for the Human Frontier Science Program (HFSP), met on June 20 and 21, 2002 in Berlin to review the progress made so far and discuss the future of the HFSP.

Paragraph 2

The HFSP is a multilateral science program that aims to contribute to the advancement of the frontiers of human knowledge by promoting, through intercontinental collaboration and training, fundamental research focused on the elucidation of the complex mechanisms of living organisms, to facilitate maximum use of the MSPs' scientific potential, and to allow the fullest possible use of the research results, taking into account bioethical considerations for the benefit of all humankind.

Paragraph 3

The HFSP was proposed by the Government of Japan at the Venice Economic Summit in June 1987. The other participants in the Economic Summit welcomed this initiative. The Program was further developed by international scientific committees composed of eminent scientists and experts from the seven Economic Summit countries, Switzerland and the European Community. Following the recommendations of these committees, intergovernmental meetings were held in June and July 1989 in Tokyo and Berlin respectively, in order to establish a framework for the implementation of the HFSP. At the Intergovernmental Conference held in Washington, D.C. in 1997, the representatives recommended the continued support of the Program for a further phase of five years, guided by a communiqué issued at the end of the conference.

Paragraph 4

In accordance with the 1997 communiqué, a scientific review of the program was carried out in 2000. This was a follow-up to the previous evaluation in

1995/96 and addressed the impact of the Program. It was reported to the Board of Trustees (BOT) in March 2001. The conclusions of the review were very positive and emphasized in particular that:

- HFSP grant holders find the Program a unique source of support for inter-continental interdisciplinary research;
- New collaborations vital to the execution of the research are created and continue after the project;
- The Fellowship Program is one of a number of outstanding programs;
- For both grants and fellowships, HFSP publications have citation performance well above the norm.

Paragraph 5

At the 2002 Intergovernmental Conference in Berlin, the representatives recognized that the scientific value of the HFSP warrants its continuation for a further phase of five years, with the following understandings.

Paragraph 6

AIMS OF THE PROGRAM: The aims, objectives, and mission of the Program will continue to be the provision of a unique and important contribution to fundamental research of the highest quality, based on international peer review. The representatives reaffirmed the value of the Program's emphasis on interdisciplinary science, encouragement of researchers early in their careers who are expected to play an important role in originating creative research, and international and especially intercontinental collaboration, including training and mobility. In this respect, new initiatives introduced such as the Young Investigators' Grants, and the Career Development Awards are particularly welcome.

Paragraph 7

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES – RESEARCH AREAS: The representatives noted that the Program had contributed to the advancement of the frontiers of human knowledge by supporting the elucidation of brain functions and of biological functions through molecular level approaches. The representatives also noted that it is desirable to combine these areas into one topic, 'complex mechanisms of living organisms'; this recognises the increasing interdisciplinarity of research in the life sciences. The representatives also recommended that the Board of Trustees (BOT), in consultation with the Council of Scientists, review the Program to ensure that it continues to support research activities in which it has a unique contribution to offer.

Paragraph 8

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES – FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS: The representatives agreed that Program activities in the subject areas will continue to be research grants, long and short-term fellowships, and workshops which include annual awardees' meetings. Some of these initiatives are designed to enable talented young researchers to reach independence early in their careers.

Paragraph 9

NEW MEMBERSHIP: The representatives noted the importance of promoting new supporting parties for the further development of the international and collaborative nature of the Program. New Management Supporting Parties, for example from Asia, should be considered to achieve a better balance of MSPs among continents. The current MSPs will take active steps to expand the number of supporting members to participate in this unique, cutting-edge, global research fund. The BOT will be requested to consider and respond to an application for membership in a timely manner. The BoT is asked to reconsider the criteria for new memberships.

Paragraph 10

FINANCING: The HFSP will continue to be supported by contributions from all MSPs. Unconditional financial contributions are preferred, although in kind contributions, consistent with the guidelines of the HFSP, are also welcome. Representatives welcomed the progress that had been made and reaffirmed the importance of achieving the goals offered in the 1997 communiqué.

Representatives agreed that the new initiatives authorized by the BOT meeting in March 2000 required additional funding. They therefore agreed that the scientific value of the HFSP justifies a funding level of 60 million US\$ and stressed the urgency of attaining a funding level of this amount and an equal match in the amount contributed by Japan and other MSPs by 2004. The working group, established according to § 12, is asked, on the basis of relevant criteria, to develop a financial scheme for contributions of non-Japanese MSP's, leading to an appropriate and fair burden sharing. In this respect, the chair of the IGC proposed that the working group takes into consideration additional criteria for an equitable allocation of burden. The IGC expects the working group to present its results on a new contribution formula by the end of February 2003.

MSP's are asked to submit nominations for the working group to the chair of the working group by August 1st, 2002. Members of the working group should be given a strong mandate by the respective MSP's.

Paragraph 11

GENERAL STRUCTURE: The HFSP Organization will maintain its present legal status as an international, non-governmental, non-profit association during the next phase.

The government of France, Region Alsace and the city of Strasbourg will maintain the preferential treatment and privileges they have provided to the HFSP Organization and its employees.

The BOT, whose members represent the MSPs, will continue to govern the Program in accordance with the Statutes and By-Laws of the HFSP.

The representatives reaffirmed the important role that the BOT plays in overseeing the Program and urged all MSPs to ensure that they are represented on the BOT by members with appropriate decision-making authority.

Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) handles overall policy and makes ultimate decisions on important issues including the continuation of HFSP and the scope of the research it supports. The IGC consists of the representatives of MSPs, and is held in accordance with a communiqué of the previous IGC or at the request of the majority of the MSPs.

MSPs should make a strong and sustained commitment to make it possible for HFSP to implement its activities effectively. For this purpose, various measures including feasibility of attaining international organization status or similar status for HFSP, and attaining international organization personnel status or similar status for HFSP personnel might be examined.

Paragraph 12

REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM: The Program will continue to be reviewed by various means, including regular reports. The representatives noted that the previous reviews reported in 1996 and 2001 clearly demonstrated the excellence of the Program and its continuing global importance. A further review of the effectiveness of the Program from a scientific viewpoint will be carried out. The necessity and timing of the next review will be discussed at the IGC meeting in 2004.

Representatives agreed to establish a working group (WG) responsible to the IGC, logistically supported by the HFSP secretariat. The activity of the working group would be :

- 1) to examine the scope and development of HFSP's activities and the financial requirements,
- 2) to propose financial targets beyond 2004,
- 3) to study the feasibility of attaining international organisation status or similar status for HFSP
- 4) to develop a strategy for expanding the number of supporting members

The results of the working group will be presented to the BoT and to MSP's.

Paragraph 13

NEXT CONFERENCE: The representatives of the MSPs decided that the next IGC meeting would be held in Switzerland in 2004. The IGC in 2004 would decide on overall policy regarding the scope of research supported, review the financial situation and set a new financial framework and review the success in attracting new MSPs.

Berlin June 21, 2002