

Resolution of the 10th FORUM ENGELBERG 1999

FORUM ENGELBERG was founded in 1989 as a non-profit autonomous organisation under Art. 60 of the Swiss Civil Code. The aim was to create an international platform for debate amongst illustrious specialists working in such diverse fields as science, technology, economics, philosophy, politics and culture, providing opportunities for them to exchange views and discuss key-issues affecting research and modern science which are of interest to the whole human race. The FORUM has international status and its aims are non-political, non-denominational and open to all cultures of the world.

The FORUM ENGELBERG '99 on "Risks and Safety of Technical Systems – In View of Profound Changes" was chaired by J.I. Vargas, former Minister of Science and Technology, Brazil, and presided by W. Kröger as expert of the scientific committee. In its course and through the rich information exchange between scientists and political leaders from different countries and fields, many new insights on a multitude of issues were gained. Among these it was recognized that technological developments are emerging at an even faster rate, are getting more complex and often imply global consequences. Subsequently, the gap between science and technology development on the one hand and "factual" risks and their perception by the public on the other hand is continuously widening. At the same time, the conference has shown sufficiently developed interdisciplinary capacities (e.g., in the field of risk assessment) that international collaboration could help bridge these gaps.

It was, thus, concluded that there is an urgent need for an international body that would:

- review and further develop knowledge, skills and procedures dealing with risks and safety and trigger international projects;
- provide recommendations and guidance for decision makers;
- develop a concept for a global platform where science, technology, risk concepts and public policy can interact, and
- assume a role as mediator.

These insights were formalised in the following:

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Resolution

Having taken into account that

- the limits of science are open and temporarily set by current knowledge only
- technological developments are emerging at an ever faster rate, are getting more complex and will have impacts extending from local events to global consequences,

the 10th FORUM ENGELBERG also recognised that

- the gap between science, technological development and the public is widening
- the interdisciplinary field of "risk and safety" has developed capacities that could help to bridge the above mentioned gaps.

It, therefore, has been recommended to and agreed by the participants of the 10th FORUM ENGELBERG to

- further develop knowledge and skills dealing with risk and safety
- develop a concept for a global platform where science, technology, risk concepts and public policy can interact
- submit an adequate action plan addressing these issues to the most appropriate international organisation
- assume their role as mediators between science, technology, risk concepts and the public.