

Joint Communiqué for the Human Frontier Science Program January 22, 1992

1. Representatives of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the Commission of the European Communities, constituting the Management Supporting Parties (MSPs) for the Human Frontier Science Program (HFSP), met on January 21 and 22, 1992 in Tokyo to discuss the future of the HFSP after the end of the initial stage of the Program.

2. The HFSP is a multilateral science program that aims to contribute to advancement of the frontiers of human knowledge by promoting, through international cooperation, basic 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 bio-ethical considerations, for the benefits of all humankind.

3. The HFSP was proposed by the Japanese government 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 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 implementation of the HFSP. The Berlin meeting reached consensus on implementation of the HFSP for an initial experimental phase ending March 31, 1992 and to set out the form in which the HFSP was to be implemented. Thus the International Human Frontier Science Program Organization (HFSP/O), which is governed by Trustees who are nominated by the MSPs, was established as its implementing organ in Strasbourg, France, in October 1989.

4. Since its inception, the HFSP has become well known in the scientific community and has obtained special recognition for the high quality of the research it is supporting and because of the care, rigor and impartiality of its system of international peer review. The initial phase of the HFSP owed its success to the efforts of the Secretary-General and staff of the Secretariat, the Council of Scientists and its Review Committees, the Board of Trustees, and the strong support of the MSPs. In September 1991, the Board of Trustees submitted a report ("Report of the Board of Trustees to the Management Supporting Parties") on the HFSP activities to the MSPs and recommended the continued support for the Program beyond its initial phase.

5. The representatives of the governments of the MSPs noted that the research areas of the HFSP and research collaborations it supports were likely to benefit from longer-term support, and recognized the desirability of continuing the HFSP beyond the initial phase with the following understanding.

6. In line with the Board of Trustees' report mentioned above, the operating objectives and principles of the Program will continue to be to support basic research of

the highest quality, as based on international peer review, to promote international (in particular, intercontinental) collaborative research, and to support interdisciplinary science.

7. Emphasis will continue to be placed on the encouragement of researchers early in their careers who are expected to play an important role in originating and pursuing creative research.

8. Research areas for funding will continue to be basic research on elucidation of brain functions, and of biological functions through molecular level approaches, subject to any changes decided by the Board of Trustees upon advice by the Council of Scientists.

9. Methods of research support in the subject areas will continue to be research grants, long-and-short-term fellowships and workshops.

10. The Program will continue to be reviewed by various means, including through regular reports. A review of the effectiveness of the Program from the scientific viewpoint will be carried out some 5 years after the start of the initial phase (i.e. by the end of 1994). A major review of all aspects of the Program will be conducted and reported by the end of March 1996 to the MSPs as a basis for considering the future of the Program.

11. The HFSP will be supported by contributions from all MSPs during and after fiscal year 1992 of the HFSP. Unconditional financial contributions will be preferred; in-kind contributions, consistent with the guidelines of the HFSP, will also be welcome. The MSPs recognized the desirability of achieving a better balance of the financial contributions to the Program, so that the proportion of Program support to be provided by Japan moderates through the increase of support from other MSPs. A desirable goal to be achieved over time, and as soon as feasible, is an equal match between the contributions of Japan and that of the other MSPs.

12. Subject to the provisions of paragraphs 10 and 13, the HFSP will continue its legal status as an international, non-governmental, non-profit association during its next phase. The governance of the Program will continue by the Board of Trustees whose members represent the MSPs, the Council of Scientists and the Secretariat, in accordance with the Statutes and By-laws of the HFSP. The government of France and the city of Strasbourg will maintain the preferential treatment and privileges they have provided the HFSP and its employees.

13. With a view to achieving the sound development of the Program through, among others, secure and adequate funding, discussion will take place, initially within the Board of Trustees, on possible changes to the status and constitution of the HFSP.

14. The opportunity to become a MSP is open to all interested and qualified countries. Acceptance of those countries desiring to join the HFSP will be decided by the Board of Trustees after deliberation on such factors as the country's scientific capacity in the research areas of the HFSP and the degree of the country's intended support to the HFSP.