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Detlev Ganten

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The year 2017 has been another amazing year packed with scientific progress. Genome editing of immune cells is making gene therapy of cancer a reality. A continued digital revolution is providing a massive accumulation of new data related to health and disease. Great advances toward personalized and precision medicine and a plethora of applications are arising from new methods in cell biology and medical technology. Those are just a few of the central topics at the World Health Summit in 2017. But unfortunately, despite these great achievements – and their parallels in the acceleration of the innovation cycle for medical technologies and equipment – the global burden of disease has remained largely unchanged.

We should be able to translate all this progress in science into better standards of health for all, but too many obstacles remain. Noncommunicable diseases such as hypertension, cancer, diabetes, and

neurodegenerative conditions remain the leading causes of death worldwide. Epidemics are turning into pandemics through the increasing interconnectivity of our world and the globalization of lifestyles. All the while, millions of people are fleeing war, terror, natural disasters, and poverty. It is growing harder to achieve and maintain effective healthcare in rural areas and spreading megacities. What can we do?

“Give me but a firm spot on which to stand, and I shall move the earth,” said the great Greek mathematician Archimedes. What sort of spot would be required to improve global health? This firm spot can only be the reliable international cooperation of all stakeholders – from academics to politicians, from the private sector and civil society. A milestone in this quest was the prominent position health topics assumed on the agendas of this year’s G7 and G20 meetings. But we cannot leave things there; it is our shared responsibility to turn discussions into action.

WELCOME MESSAGE WORLD HEALTH SUMMIT PRESIDENTS

The World Health Summit 2017 brings together stakeholders and decision-makers from all sectors, and from all over the world. Our combined forces can achieve change, and provide the firm spot from which to improve health worldwide. The World Health Summit Regional Meeting held last May in the Canadian city of Montreal demonstrated what can be achieved if we unite the brightest minds in health. The World Health Summit in Berlin will carry this momentum forward to contribute to an agenda by which health can be improved globally.

As presidents of the World Health Summit 2017, we cordially invite you to make the best of this unique event, which will feature over 40 sessions, more than 200 expert speakers and 2,000 participants from 100 countries. Join us to make this world a healthier world.

We look forward to welcoming you at the World Health Summit 2017 in Berlin!



Helène Boisjoly

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