Global Health: The Leopoldina Annual Assembly looks at ways of achieving global health and equity

Cooperation among many disciplines is required to improve the health situation and equity of all people worldwide. At its two-day Annual Assembly 2022, which will begin today in Halle (Saale)/Germany, the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina addresses "Global Health: From Health Services to Climate Change and to Social Justice" and thus focuses on a broad spectrum of global health issues. In the morning, WHO Director General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, German Federal Minister of Education and Research Bettina Stark-Watzinger, and Minister President of Saxony-Anhalt Dr. Reiner Haseloff will all give welcome addresses. The Annual Assembly lectures are all being livestreamed.

"Global Health is an interdisciplinary field of work that aims to improve the health of everyone worldwide and to promote health equity. Health impact must be taken into account in all areas of policymaking, an approach known as ‘Health in all policies’", expert in veterinary medicine and microbiology Prof. Dr. Lothar H. Wieler says. The President of the Robert Koch Institute has been a member of the Leopoldina since 2010. As Acting Senator of the Section Global Health, he is part of the Annual Assembly’s Organising Committee, alongside the Leopoldina members Prof. Dr. Susanne Hartmann, biologist and infection immunologist, and molecular biologist and virologist Prof. Dr. Thomas C. Mettenleiter. In his Inaugural Address today at 12.15 p.m., Wieler will discuss the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic for global health.

Social scientist Prof. Dr. Johanna Hanefeld will speak about “International Health Protection and Health Equity” in today’s evening lecture at 8.15 p.m. The Head of the Centre for International Health Protection at the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin/Germany will discuss issues such as the significance of globally connected and more robust public health systems.

In the morning, the Leopoldina honours the materials scientist and biomedical engineer Prof. Dr. Francesca Santoro with the “Leopoldina Early Career Award”. The award, funded by the Commerzbank Foundation, is valued at 30,000 euros. In her lecture the award winner will discuss her work in the field of bioelectronics, where she is developing new materials capable of interacting with the skin and the brain.

Yesterday, Thursday 22 September, the Leopoldina Senate elected the geologist Prof. Dr. Onno Oncken as member of the Academy’s Presidium. He succeeds engineering expert Prof. Dr. Sigmar Wittig, who as Secretary of Class I – Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Engineering, has been a member of the Academy’s Presidium since 2012. The Senate also elected Vice President Prof. Regina Riphahn Ph.D. for another term. The economist, a member of the Leopoldina since 2007, is Professor of Statistics and Empirical Economic Research at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg.

This year also sees more than 35 highly talented pupils from throughout Germany attend the Annual Assembly. They will listen to the lectures at the event and have the chance to speak to the researchers. The pupils’ programme is funded...
by the "Friends of the Leopoldina" association.

The Annual Assembly is being livestreamed on the Leopoldina’s YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/NationaleAkademiederWissenschaftenLeopoldina. The livestream is available until 6.30 p.m. today, and again for the evening lecture at 8.15 p.m. and on Saturday from 8.30 a.m. Lectures are held in English and German and simultaneously interpreted. You can find the full programme of the Annual Assembly and further information on the Leopoldina website: https://www.leopoldina.org/en/events/event/event/2936/.

About the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina:
As the German National Academy of Sciences, the Leopoldina provides independent science-based policy advice on matters relevant to society. To this end, the Academy develops interdisciplinary statements based on scientific findings. In these publications, options for action are outlined; making decisions, however, is the responsibility of democratically legitimized politicians. The experts who prepare the statements work in a voluntary and unbiased manner. The Leopoldina represents the German scientific community in the international academy dialogue. This includes advising the annual summits of heads of state and government of the G7 and G20 countries. With 1,600 members from more than 30 countries, the Leopoldina combines expertise from almost all research areas. Founded in 1652, it was appointed the National Academy of Sciences of Germany in 2008. The Leopoldina is committed to the common good.

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