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Consortium on Ethics in Higher Education,**

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Colleagues,

It is indeed a great honour and privilege to welcome you to Geneva as we launch the Globethics.net Consortium on Ethics in Higher Education. I welcome all our friends, partners and colleagues from the various countries and continents - North America, Canada and Mexico; Africa and Asia; Europe and the Middle East and the far Islands of our one world. The journey of 1000 miles begins with the first step, ancient Chinese sages tell us.

A World in Disarray

Currently, we are witness to many developments around the globe which make us conclude that the world is in a period of uncharacteristically political, social and economic instability. Some have used the term "G-Zero" to describe a "growing vacuum in global governance". Humanity has not witnessed this amount of unprecedented "geo-political recession" and upheaval since World War Two, with a downturn in politicians and leading business and intellectual figures being able to deliver leadership, vision, orientation, humanity, calm and peace on a global scale.

It is a world lacking in much required responsible leadership at all levels, thus, the rapid breakdown in long standing domestic, regional and international political equilibria. Dramatic events taking place in various parts of the globe continue to cause harm and pain to millions of people who suffer hunger, forceful migrations due to wars, climate-related catastrophes, the search for meaning in life and economic hardships. These situations are not necessarily new. But in our own times are aggravated by the competing medium of mass communications and the spread of internet based information networks, all of which increase doubts, escalate crises and cause panic including insecurity amongst humankind. In reality, many have started to doubt the ability of humankind to cope with these emergent challenges.

In the words of Sean West, deputy CEO of the Global political Risk research and consulting firm Eurasia, Europe, Middle east and Africa: "the global order that

prevailed since the end of World war Two were exhausted and new leaders have not yet emerged, creating a vacuum. A new model of global governance is yet to emerge". What we have currently is "populism" growing worldwide due to lack of purposeful leadership and good governance in many countries; the insurgencies among the youth and their sponsors using terrorism as trade; the lack of basic trust in institutions due to failures and the urgent realisation that integrity is at large. Finally, the climate and ecological crisis challenge humans to deal with entire creation - nature, flora, fauna and humanity with wisdom that is values-driven. This is part of the reason for convoking this Consortium since education is an appropriate tool to address the anomaly. We at Globethics.net have had ample reason to reflect on the path of humanity at the crossroads knowing fully well that in many nations, the elites are in charge and generally share one thing in common: they are products of leading universities. This situation has created undue problems of under-development, poverty, ignorance, lack of access, corruption, fake medicines and health deficiencies in the global landscape. In the words of Lennart Levi, Fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science, "The lack of ethics and the prevalence of corruption in the public sector is probably the biggest obstacle to social and economic development. Conversely, one can say that the most important asset of a society is the ethical quality of its institutions", and I would add here the ethical quality of "persons" and of "leaders". The elite have knowledge of the social, natural and speculative sciences. They have technological competencies and intellectual abilities, but they sometimes show a despicable lack of the much desired leadership qualities in character and an adequate ethical compass. Research results show that human beings worldwide are dying due to problems of this ethical gap, expressed in the inadequate application of values-driven leadership for life and sustainable development across sectors.

At Globethics.net, we desire to enable the transformation of higher education institutions, faculties and students to achieve positive outcomes and global competitiveness for society as graduates and future leaders.

Education – key to Human Development

As many of you may agree, education is at the centre of every human settlement. It is necessary for character formation for the young. Through education, the realization of meaning and purpose in society is enabled and beneficiaries are empowered to gain more access to opportunities, resources and power. Education if acquired continues to increase the value chain of any nation. States, governments, religious organisations, cultures and peoples all through the ages engage in education as a vehicle to transform. This explains why the agenda for "Education Reform" remains priority for almost every country in the world. Under such transformational situations, there is urgency to adapt the world's educational systems to consciously evolve and transform in order to support the critical swifts and transitions happening around the globe.

Through education, the young and future generations receive knowledge and traditions that help them enter into the totality of reality. Therefore, a primary concern of society essentially is to teach the young. Society can only successfully rebuild itself through the younger generation. This is the opposite of what currently happens. But what do we teach the young? Can the teacher give to students what the teacher does not possess? How do we educate ourselves? How does education take place?

Is education anything, nothing or something? Does this something stand for a system that educates what is human in humankind, especially the young, leading to recognition of the needs of humanity through all ages by pointing to their source, origin and end?

From the viewpoint of looking at things from their essence, purpose, last end and primary goals, values are needed. But values do not fall from the sky. They are taught and transmitted from one generation to the next. They adapt, change, mutate and transform, yet retain ingredients and some essentials which make them relevant. Values come through education of the young. These values help the young grow with orientation. Orientation is offered through education. To educate means to help the human soul enters into the totality of the real. This real is what we call life. Life itself is a gift, received freely and reflected by humans in their ability to think and reason. This is described as rationality, recognized by the sages of Africa, Asia and documented by the Greek philosopher Aristotle over two thousand years ago as unique to humankind. Integral Education makes possible the emergence of all-round persons, equipped upon completion of education to transform society positively.

In reflecting education in the twenty first century therefore, 'true education' must be an 'education in criticism'. It is the exercise to question things from their origin, allowing doubt and examination of the problem to come to a balanced conclusion.

Lessons Learnt from the Global Ethics Forum

The Global Ethics Forum of June 2016 held in Geneva, challenged universities worldwide to play a leading role in reversing this global slide through values-driven educational models for future leaders. Universities can apply -*"Transformative Teaching and Research Methods; Students Network for Ethics in Extracurricular Engagement; Trans-disciplinary Ethics Curricular; Teaching Business Ethics as a stakeholder discipline for sustainable value orientation; Research Ethics issues dealing with plagiarism and Ghost-Writing; Publication Ethics; Governance concerns regarding Recruitment of students and staff; Committees for research; Green Campuses; Measurement and Quality; New Management Models and finally Anti-corruption policies"* (Global Ethics Forum 2016 Report, Higher Education - Ethics in Action, February 2017).

The theme of ethics cuts across sectors: Educational and Research Ethics; Public Services and Political Ethics; Inter-religious Ethics and Theology; and Economic and Environmental Ethics. With an emphasis on the theme of "Ethics in Higher Education", Globethics.net offers some services which include: Research and Publications; Knowledge and Library; Dialogue and Network; and Action and Services.

According to the Magna Charta Universitatum: *"The University is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies differently organised because of geography and historical heritage. It produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching"*.

This essentially implies the integration of ethics in the entirety of higher education policies and programs by integrating Ethics as a product and central derivative for the orientation of science, governance, economy, technology and culture with life

sustaining values to guide students, teachers and community. The aim is to target Ethics in Higher Education as a primary agenda in preparing the youth - future leaders for responsible leadership roles in the larger society upon completion of studies. In this search for solutions to global problems and paradoxes, the Consortium desires to create an ethical society through the education of future leaders for life and sustainable development in measurable actions set forth by the United Nations Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) 2015 and the UNESCO education Framework 2030 some of which include:

- 1) Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning;
- 2) By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. (SDG 4, UNESCO Education Framework); and
- 3) Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms; develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels (SDG 16).

Four key areas emerge for universities to concentrate efforts on and make a difference through:

- **teaching**- to integrate responsibility in teaching in order to transform students into responsible citizens and future leaders;
- **research** – to integrate responsibility into research through ethical principles that create innovation and, promote scientific progress and respect the balance of the human and spiritual ecology of humankind;
- **governance** – to turn the spotlight into the institutions themselves by ensuring that codes of ethics and principles of balance of power driven by values is inculcated in the institutional framework itself and put into practice at all levels – teaching by doing;
- **society** – to integrate the notion of responsibility in the discussion with higher education's main stakeholders such as regulators, Commissions, Ministries of Education and Governments. Is there any other viable alternative for humanity at this time? What future does society expect if the leaders of the future are not equipped with real life-skills during formation and training as medical doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, technicians, diplomats, academics, professionals, pastors, development practitioners, researchers, sociologists, community leaders, family members citizens of their countries?

Our agenda therefore at Globethics.net is to move from realisation to vision and to action, knowing fully well that the next generation of leaders needs an ethical geography to meet the challenges and dilemmas of the future. Therefore, Globethics.net is developing a new strategy of leading a consortium of fifty universities and more, many of them in the global south, to make ethics in higher

education a compelling instrument and integrated part of all the educational programmes of their institutions. It starts from the governance framework, through the regulators of higher education in government, to the development of curriculum, content, students' admissions processes, staff recruitment and promotions, research methodology, the ranking and benchmarking of institutions on terms that are ethically compliant and the mandate that faculty and community activities are oriented in the art of values-driven collaboration with integrity.

Ethics is Key:

Ethics is at the forefront of our concerns, in family, education, culture, religion, economy, politics, and business and in our daily lives. Yes, the fact is that we have only limited resources and means to do as much. This is why we have to focus our energy and efforts in the coming years on ethics in higher education. Our task today is to assist in preparing the young and future leaders of Africa, Asia, Latin America and of other countries and regions of the world to become more informed, ethical, and responsible within the framework of a values-driven agenda. We do this by sharing our resources, library documents and research findings, publications from many different sources that help broaden our minds and our perspectives on what is right and wrong in the world. In order for a student to learn books, articles and journals are as essential as water is to life. The Globethics library offers all that and more: now more than four million documents are waiting to be discovered and used. Because they are on online, there are no forms and no waiting times. Because they are free, people needn't be rich to read them.

For teachers, students and institutions engaged with education, the challenges of the present expose the exponential growth of knowledge which calls for an interdisciplinary reflection on how to relate the different branches of the natural sciences and the humanities into a coherent picture of world, life, spirit and mind. Today we face myriad of challenges. It is generally agreed that our world is in need of guiding ideas, a vision, to more effectively direct our intellectual, moral and scientific capabilities for world peace, global security, human dignity and social justice.

At Globethics.net we do exactly this. Globethics.net stands to promote and market Ethics as a product and central derivative for the orientation of science, governance, economy, technology, culture and religions with values which guide people everywhere. Yes, the time has come for us all to realise that the link to integration of humanities' various aspects is by realising the central role of values for life and sustainable development. Our modern civilization needs to progress on a sustainable manner.

Cognisant therefore of the fact that an ethical society is needed to train future leaders through education for values-driven life centred on sustainable development, this Consortium aims to attain the following results and services:

Services to be Delivered

- 1. Strengthen the ethical reputation of higher education institutions by supporting efforts to integrate values-based decision in governance,**

management and daily practice of staff, management and board of educational institutions.

- Report of baseline survey among institutions on ethics in governance and management;
- Elaboration of ethics standards and benchmarking for ethical governance and management;
- Support and tailored advise;
- Development of resources and tools;
- Development of documentation and publications;
- Capacity building;
- Awareness raising.
- Learning Research and Development
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2. Promote professional ethical awareness and providing support to teachers in ethics practice and teaching, research projects and capacity building.

- Report of baseline survey among teaching staff on ethics awareness and teaching practices;
- Development of resources and tools;
- Development of documentation and publications;
- Case studies and best practices produced through work groups and for a;
- Capacity building;
- Awareness raising;
- Provide opportunities for peer exchanges
- Activities initiatives initiated by teachers that promote interaction with business and social community;
- Promote professional development in ethics.

3. Support students with tools and resources to think and act according to values.

- Initiatives that improve the ethical environment of institutions where students learn;
- Initiatives that raise the ethical quality standards in education;
- Report on ethics survey among youth;
- Access to ethics documentation and resources in the form of on line collections: development of material (including visual, selected and curated readings, on ethics and education, as well as other issues that are of interest to students as a result of the survey);
- Case studies and best practices produced through work groups and for a:
- Reports documenting the results of baseline survey, which takes stock of the present situation with regard to ethics and values in among youth and people in education;

- Essay and games competitions for youth where the accent is on international cooperation;
- Ethical and green camps exchanges of students across cultures and between regions;
- Tailored made (online) modules and curricula with youth participation of different countries in their development;
- Publishing relevant works of students;

4. Integrating ethical reflection and action in research, ensuring that research goals are beneficial and means are not harmful.

- Survey of existing ethics codes and their implementation in research
- Promoting and monitoring online research workgroups;
- Publishing research results.

5. Raise the awareness of policy makers and governance levels on the need to integrate values-based policies in education and in research.

- Visibility for the activities and deliverables of the Consortium and that of its members in line with this Agreement;
- Advocacy in international and regional circles (and national for a through members) to advance policies that integrate ethics in governance and management of higher education and promote integrated quality ethics teaching;
- Advocacy for the implementation of the SDG 4 and 16 as stated under Article 2.

This Consortium on Ethics in Higher Education desires to give voice to values and support the potentials of universities and higher institutions of learning, especially those from the global south, but also those within the northern hemisphere with assets and advantage. The Consortium shall seek to increase the visibility, ranking and network of its members through improving their reputation and certification. Members shall participate at several conference and knowledge bazaar provided for the Consortium.

Furthermore, access to the Globethics.net Library with its large repositories of documents research materials and literature increase resources available to members across applied disciplines of study. The publication of works, books and online digital journals through the Globethics.net Publications unit adds value to the work of research fellows, students, experts and teachers. Joint publications and joint research survey and research amongst partners in the northern and southern globe shall be promoted through the Consortium. Training Modules, training of trainers, joint projects, partnerships, exchange of teachers, faculty, students and common platforms for networking are part of the benefits which the Consortium brings. It is expected that Globethics.net shall offer prizes and awards to the following categories:

- Best University Prize for Ethics Studies
- Best Research and Development in Technology Ethics Prize
- Best Community impact Programme Prize

Gratitude

Let me end with some words of thanks. My gratitude goes to all of you who have responded positively to the invitation extended by the Globethic.net Board of Foundation for this inaugural meeting during which we present and launch the Consortium on Ethics in Higher Education. Your presence is an expression of your determination to engage meaningfully in the processes that support sustainable development and transformation of society through people – starting with the youth and students who are the future and primary beneficiaries of our work as teachers.

I thank the Board and management of Globethics.net for reflecting strategically on the path to follow in the next years towards making our world a better place. Globethics.net has rightly identified Ethics in Higher Education as a key area for deepened reflection and action. It is generally agreeable to assert that the human person imbued with rationality, personality, dignity, character, ethical and moral ability, has and can more often than is acknowledged, using the tools of modern technology, science and natural wisdom mitigate the unfortunate crises that human beings create for each other and that they alone ultimately can solve. The human person therefore is at the centre of the solution to the entire set of problems, questions and needs present in the social fabric of our global community. With ethical principles coming to the fore when asking questions for example on what OUGHT to be done and following them up with universal values that transcend race, gender, religion, status, and clime, a conversation has intensified at www.globethics.net on issues of what is RIGHT, FAIR, JUST, HONEST, HUMAN, COURAGEOUS, RATIONAL. Education is at the centre of our work at Globethics.net and principles that promote ethics, integrity and sustainable development form the bedrock of this education.

In responding to the problems facing humanity, I invite you to share some strong belief in humanity and the positive things we can all collectively do to make it a better place. This optimism is to counteract the fatalism of many. Quoting Christoph Stückelberger, "fatalism is sin" (fatalists do not believe that God through humans can act). This in effect means to stand up with prophetic courage, armed with ethical, intellectual, rational, moral and spiritual strength to give hope, serve those in need, pursue peace, defend the life, dignity and rights of all peoples and maintain a fundamental option for the poor who are the most vulnerable in society.

The bottom line for leadership and followership is not always the emphasis on what I have but rather on who I am. Not what I learnt from others but rather on what I taught others. Not what I received, but rather on what I gave. Not what I pulled out and took out but rather on what I put in. Not what I accumulated, but what I shared. Indeed and worthy of thought, not even on how or what I lived for, but what I left behind. This indeed is the challenge. It is global ethics in action. I invite you to join the Consortium on Ethic in Higher Education as we launch the Programme.

Thank you for your patient attention and participation.