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***Changing Globular Trends Demanding New
Commitments and Undertakings****

Abstract

During the last decades, there have been significant changes both in the mode and on the basic approach of the decisions making actors in manipulating globular happenings, issues such as finance and marketing gaining priority over humanistic and/on scientific concerns. The impact of these trends is not only confined to featuring issues such as environmental deterioration, destruction of cultural heritage and of natural habitats, but it is having a significant impact on all sorts of humanistic aspects and on academic life. Accordingly, national academies now have to take a new stand to develop strategies that would help protecting our habitat, at the same time disseminating a feeling of awareness on cultural and natural assets. It would be the future task of academic bodies to develop scientific policies that would give priority to humanistic and to academic issues.

On behalf of the Turkish Academy of Sciences, we would like to express our gratitude to the Montenegro Academy of Arts and Sciences for hosting this meeting. The Turkish Academy of Sciences considers the initiative taken by our colleagues at Montenegro as a timely undertaking of vital importance. We anticipate that through this platform there will be the stimulus to reconsider, not only the future role of scientific academies, but more specifically their commitments in building up a better World.

* The paper is printed as submitted.

Regardless of the structural diversity of their formations, science academies evidently represent the most eminent intelligentsia of their country. Almost everywhere the national academies are looked on as the competent learned bodies; thus pending authoritative advice, not only on academic matters but also on all-important issues, are among the tasks anticipated of the academies. Accordingly, academies cannot limit their missions only to promoting science, developing policies that would assign trajectories leading to the betterment of life, developing an awareness for our shared habitat and more specifically, playing an active role for enlightenment are to be accounted as imperative duties of academies. In view of the growing threat and pressure on our planet, on our habitat, on our social welfare and on our intellectual environment, academies should not remain indifferent; also considering that the „negative” part of the globular picture is intentionally being kept hidden from the public, academies have to play an active role in setting and monitoring agenda and restrain from going after or falling into the expedient trends set with political or economic biases. In this respect, considering that „promoting learned advice requires a demand”, stand as the major controversy; even if the academies are not called on to take counsel, as the learned elite body their community they are still to be valued by the standpoint they have taken.

What has been noted above does not necessarily overruns the conventional tasks of national academies; promoting and monitoring science and devising means to use science as a tool for the social and economic betterment of our society are incontrovertible terms of our presence; however, the social and political changes that are taking place with the onset of the 21st century have endorsed a new responsibility to the academic bodies in setting the agenda not only in scientific matters, but also in social, cultural, economic and political issues.

During the last decades, there has been significant changes, both in the mode and on the basic approach of the decisions making actors in manipulating globular happenings, issues such as finance and marketing gaining priority over humanistic and/on scientific concerns. Moreover, the rhetoric that has developed during the last decades to provoke chauvinistic or religious concerns, is already having its devastating effects on society. The impacts of these trends are not only confined to featuring issues such as environmental deterioration, destruction of cultural heritage and of natural habitats, but it is having a significant impact on all sorts of humanistic aspects and on the way of our thinking. It is becoming more and more evident that the present globular

trends are far off from creating a better world for all of us to share and to live in; increased misery in many parts of the world, devastation of the habitats we live in, regardless outwearing of all natural resources, polluting of the environment are among the few consequences that not only us, but the future generations will have to suffer. However still, we consider it as more significant the endeavour of ruling groups that are now in strict control of all media to divert interest from all sorts of serious happenings to contemptuous issues, at the same time creating virtual values. At present public opinion is overwhelmed by apocryphal and made-up topics that have been put on the agenda.

We, including us the scientific bodies, are proud to announce to live in an „Age of Information”, overlooking that the distribution of information and the media is under the control of national or international companies, which in turn „largely controls, directs and influences the way public opinions view on current affairs and events”. Not only the media, but also today’s religious leaders and politicians fall short of expressing the common consciousness of humanity in face of human tragedies still caused by the greedy search for power and profit from the part of states and capital. To voice on real assets became a domain left to be covered solely by non-governmental organizations that either lack the power or not adequately informed.

The biased trends of our present day are, regretfully having their negative impact on academic life, not only in designing fields of research, but more significantly on the trajectory of our thinking. It is a fact that building a curriculum on a virtually created make-believe world based on the calculation of hits in citation indexes became more accounted than for developing a conspectus of present dangers. The Turkish Academy of Sciences considers that „the aim of scientific endeavor is not to become a professor, but to facilitate life on earth.” This implies that scientists and scholars should not forget in their daily struggle for prestige and advancement in their academic careers, that they have a huge responsibility not only towards the society they live in, but also for the future of our planet and thus to the humanity at large. Scientists should feel an ethical responsibility towards humanity for the betterment of life, implying that science is not equal to technology, contrary to the general acceptance. „This principle should guide what Academies do in the world”

In view of the current economical crisis that the world is going through, we cannot avoid in considering that there is even a more severe crisis-taking place in academic thinking. Evaluation of academic life has been a matter of

calculating points in checklists, which are hardly justifiable in certain academic fields; likewise policies set by political bodies to disseminate financial support to scientific research, enforcing the formulation of short-term research projects that also require extremely complex structural designs, besides narrowing academic scope, have only led to the emergence of lobbying groups that have an excellence in deforming scientific programs to accord with the politically biased buzzwords. So as not to leave the entire domain of taking decisions in scientific and in academic matters to political bodies, science academies have to look for new policies that would accord current demands with academic merits; otherwise, we are concerned that the scientific thinking will go through a crisis, the consequences of which will in the long-run be much more devastating than the current economic one.

Accordingly, national academies now have to take a new stand to develop strategies that would contribute to enrich cultural, intellectual and economic standards. It should be accounted among the policies of science academies to help protecting our habitat, at the same time disseminating a feeling of awareness on cultural and natural assets. It would be the future task of academic bodies to develop scientific policies that would give priority to humanistic and to academic issues. We should consider means to encourage the formation of international solidarity groups by drawing attention to these issues, and help implement workable remedies to diminish the threat on the future of our civilization and of the planet we live in.