



UN Secretary-General Creates Scientific Advisory Board for Independent Advice on Breakthroughs in Science and Technology

New York, 03 Aug 2023 – The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced the creation of a new Scientific Advisory Board to advise UN leaders on breakthroughs in science and technology and how to harness the benefits of these advances and mitigate potential risks.

“Scientific and technological progress can support efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals – but they are also giving rise to ethical, legal and political concerns that require multilateral solutions.” Mr. Guterres said.

“My Scientific Advisory Board will strengthen the role of the United Nations as a reliable source of data and evidence, and provide advice to me and my senior management team.”

The Advisory Board will comprise seven eminent scholars alongside the Chief Scientists of UN System entities, the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology, and the Rector of the United Nations University. The Board will be associated with a network of diverse scientific institutions from across the world.

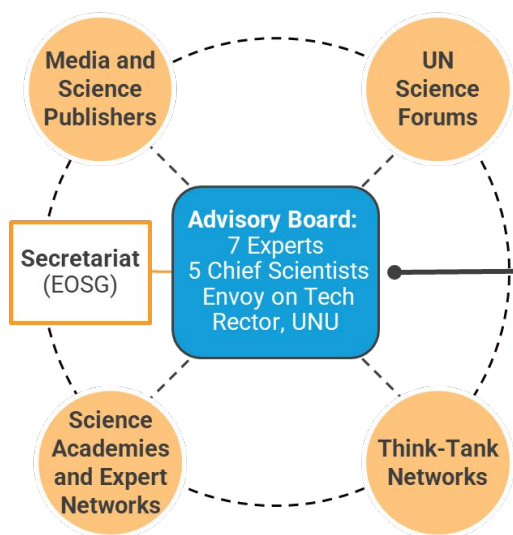
“The Secretary-General’s decision to establish a Scientific Advisory Board underscores the unwavering dedication of UN leaders to the principles of the scientific method. I look forward to supporting the UN Secretary-General in raising the voice for science-based policy and decision-making,” expressed Professor Yoshua Bengio, Scientific Director of Mila - Quebec AI Institute and Professor at the Université de Montréal.

The primary objective of the Board is to provide independent insights on trends at the intersection of science, technology, ethics, governance, and sustainable development. Through their collaborative efforts, the Board and its Network will support UN leaders in anticipating, adapting to, and leveraging the latest scientific advancements in their work for people, planet, and prosperity.

“By ensuring that UN policies and programs are founded on the best available scientific evidence and expertise, the Board will play a crucial role in navigating the complex moral, social, and political dilemmas presented by rapid scientific and technological progress.”, said Ms. Ismahane Elouafi, Chief Scientist at the Food and Agriculture Organization.

With the formation of the Scientific Advisory Board, the United Nations takes a momentous stride towards better bridging science and policy. This initiative marks a vital step towards embracing the full potential of science and technology for the collective benefit of all Member States. Through collaborative efforts and inclusive representation, the Board will bolster the UN’s capacity to address the intricate challenges and opportunities at the forefront of science and technology, fostering a path towards a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

Scientific Advisory Board's Design and Membership:



External

- **Prof. Yoshua Bengio**, A.M. Turing Awardee, Scientific Director of Mila - Quebec AI Institute, Full Professor, Department of Computer Science and Operations Research (DIRO) Université de Montréal
- **Prof. Sandra Díaz**, Senior Principal Investigator CONICET and Professor of Ecology Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina
- **Prof. Saleemul Huq**, Director International Centre for Climate Change and Development, Independent University Bangladesh
- **Prof. Fei-Fei Li**, Sequoia Professor of Computer Science, Stanford University; Denning Family Co-Director, Stanford Institute for Human-Centered AI (HAI), Stanford University
- **Prof. Alan Lightman**, Professor of the Practice of the Humanities, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **Prof. Thuli Madonsela**, Professor of Law, Stellenbosch University
- **Prof. Thomas C. Südhof**, Nobel Laureate, Professor, Department of Molecular and Cellular Physiology, Stanford University School of Medicine

Internal

- **Chief Scientists** from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), and World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- **Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology**
- **Rector**, United Nations University

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