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IFIA World Congress

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Press Release:

Inventors and innovators of the world:

- The Nobel Physics Prize is not awarded in accordance with Nobel's will
- Innovations mainly originate from independent inventors, not universities
- Triple Helix is not verified as a working model for innovation strategies

The world's inventors and innovators, from more than 110 organizations of over 60 countries, held their first World Congress in Stockholm on August 25-26.

IFIA - The International Federation of Inventors Association had commissioned SUF – the Swedish Inventors Association and STIK - Stockholm Innovators Association to arrange the two day event; The International Innovation Conference and the IFIA World Congress.

Inventors and innovators today have many challenges to tackle. Perhaps the biggest is the widespread misconception on the origin of innovations. Many countries' innovation strategies assume that innovations are mainly derived from universities and therefore a vast percentage of government funding is allocated there.

The congress recognized, through several lectures, that the inventor or innovator is the main origin of innovation. The Danish Inventors Association's president, Ms. Vivi Aakjaer, STIK' s Chairman, Mr. Örjan Strandberg and professor Christian Sandström (Sweden) all stressed this issue in their lectures, drawing on studies and reports.

Christian Sandstrom presented to the Congress, his report from 2014 "where did Sweden's top 100 innovations originate?" The report shows at a glance that 80% of the foremost Swedish innovations come from inventors, either in employment or in their own businesses, while only 20% comes out of universities and research institutes.

Professor Christoph Bartneck from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand clarified in his speech the reason why universities are not the primary source of innovation. He pointed out the essential differences in incentives, where the

researcher / scientist produces knowledge, while the inventor / innovator instead transforms knowledge into products, technologies and methods.

The widespread confusion of scientists/researchers versus inventors/innovators is not over. Another testimony for this is the world's most prestigious award in the field; Alfred Nobel physics prize. A statistical analysis presented at the congress by Professor Bartneck illustrates that nearly four-fifths of the awards have been granted to researchers, while the Nobel will literally expresses that the prize should be awarded to a "discovery or an invention", more logically quantified as 50/50 than 80/20.

The Congress also discussed the TTC- the Technology Transfer Centre, a network system which will allow cross access for IFIA member inventors, to the world's financiers, manufacturers, business partners and industrial markets. The system will be developed in Sweden where also the central administration will be established by IFIA.

IFIA's president, Mr. Alireza Rastegar, pointed out the significance of establishing specialized agencies of Technology Transfer centers (TTC) in other member states to provide an opportunity for all of the inventors equally to benefit from the commercializing and marketing opportunities.

WIPO – the World Intellectual Property Organization is a natural partner to IFIA. Its representative Mr. Marco Alemán from Geneva outlined the congress delegates on WIPO's work in terms of safeguarding and developments in intellectual property protection, particularly regarding international harmonization.

Global statistics, data and information on innovation today has a few central sources; the Global Innovation Index, the Union Innovation Scoreboard, the OECD and others. Their annual reports serve as an essential basis for both media and political policy makers.

None of the above institutions possess, however, the direct first-hand information about the number of patents, applications, demographic statistics, distribution of innovations across social sectors, etc. that IFIA possess through its 112 organizations in 63 countries. Ms. Elinora Sigurdardottir, the president of the Icelandic Inventors Association, suggested in her presentation that IFIA should constitute one of the global information institutions on innovation, along with those previously listed.

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of the inventor / innovator is the so-called serial creativity, something they share with other professionals such as designers, music composers, computer games producers, architects etc. Professor Winfried Sturm from the German Inventors Association reported on this and stressed the importance of the community supporting creativity, particularly within educational systems, identifying and nurturing the creativity of the young.

Mrs. Bola Olabisi, founder and chairman of GWIIN – the Global Women Inventors and Innovators Network, stressed in her speech the importance of the world's female inventors and how this currently insufficiently exploited resource can and should much better be preserved and supported, for the benefit of both women and men as well as society at large.

Ola Asplund represented at the congress, the Swedish Government Innovation Council. Ola described the early discussions the council has had so far. Yet, there is no representation of innovators or inventors on the Council. This was noted by the conference delegates and Mr Asplund was urged to forward this as a proposal to the Innovation Council.

The congress adopted five statements, based on the issues discussed during both the innovation conference and the congress.

These five statements are:

- Establishing that a Scientist is not the same as an Inventor.

If governments maintain the misconception that it is primarily the scientist who invents, thereby allocating most of its funding there, that will seriously diminish a nation's potential toward innovative growth. Identifying the inventor as the primary source of new technology, product development and industrial growth

is a societal concern.

- Acknowledging the importance of the Entrepreneur.

The very special talents of the inventor do – as studied – very often not include entrepreneurial talent. It is therefore essential that the inventor community seeks cooperation with the entrepreneur community for mutual prosperity, for the benefit of society as a whole.

- Declaring that Triple Helix is just a thesis, not a fact.

In very many countries, the thesis Triple Helix is presumed to be the working formula for innovation. With the facts, studies and testaments given at the IFIA congress, it is now confirmed that Triple Helix only remains a thesis, not a truth. It should therefore be abandoned as a basis for innovation strategies

- Declaring that female inventors must be acknowledged.

There is no difference in the quality of inventions made by women compared to those made by men. Nevertheless, female inventors and innovators have unfortunately by tradition and culture been much more invisible. Given that half of this planet's inhabitants – consumers, workers and voters – are women, it is only natural for a modern age to also acknowledge them as equals in the field of innovation and inventing.

- Appeal to the inheritance trustees of Alfred Nobel's will.

The execution of Alfred Nobel's will, concerning the distribution of the physics prize must be revised, so that the balance between laureates for discoveries versus inventions, mirrors the testaments exact wording, i.e. half of the laureates should be inventors, not just approximately 20%.

<http://www.ifia.com/en/ifia-news/item/519-report-on-the-international-innovation-conference-and-ifia-world-congress>

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