

MEDIA ADVISORY

Joint Press Conference on the launch of the ProgrAMme of CollaboraTions with LDCs (PACTs) Agreement

*The UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries, TWAS and ICGEB programme
launch to build scientific development in the least developed countries (LDCs)*

WHAT: The joint press conference will launch the joint agreement, which offers early-career scientists from 46 LDCs, exchange fellowships at the ICGEB laboratories in Trieste (Italy), New Delhi (India), and Cape Town (South Africa). Scientists will be working in the fields of biomedicine, biotechnology, and agriculture.

WHERE: The press conference will be hosted virtually. The access link to the Zoom platform is the following:

Link: <https://unesco-org.zoom.us/j/93045140128>

Meeting ID: 930 4514 0128

Passcode: 792066

WHEN: 10:30 AM CET, Wednesday, 20 January 2021

WHY: Through this ambitious programme that targets scientists from LDCs, the UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries, TWAS, and ICGEB pave the way for enhancing early-career researchers' scientific competences in countries with low socioeconomic development. COVID-19 has demonstrated this gap especially for LDCs.

The joint agreement will:

- facilitate international exchange and mobility of early-career scientists and their active participation in the global scientific agenda, which is now more than ever centered on the UN Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#));
- organize workshops on Biotechnology Policy and Regulatory Science primarily in sub-Saharan Africa, to provide scientists with skills that are difficult to acquire during the university curricula, granting LDCs more weight at the international level through proactive participation in the global political arena.
- Support those at the bottom end of the economic development to respond to their local needs.

WHO: Distinguished guests from various areas, including Dr. Dinakar Salunke, Dr. Luiz Zerbini [OTHERS – to be confirmed – Min. Fabrizio Nicoletti, Directorate General for Cultural and Economic Promotion and Innovation, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Phil Mjwara Director-General, Department of Science and Innovation, Government of South Africa, Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Government of India; video messages from LDCs Member States]

PANELISTS INCLUDE:

- **Prof. Romain Murenzi**, Executive Director of The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS)
- **Dr. Lawrence Banks**, Director-General of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)
- **Mr. Joshua Setipa**, Managing Director of UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries

Moderated by: **Mr. Max Paoli**, [TWAS Programme Officer]

FURTHER INFORMATION

Media Kit: <https://trello.com/b/7DuAK7HX>

Social Media:

For updates on this press conference please follow:

Twitter accounts:

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- @TWASnews
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Websites:

- [UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries](#)
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