

Dear Friends Dear Colleagues



Detlev Ganten
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It is our great pleasure to invite you to the first annual World Health Summit, which will take place October 14th-18th, 2009 in Berlin, Germany.

The World Health Summit will be the forum to bring together an international array of eminent researchers, physicians, and representatives of government, industry, and health care systems. What is common in other sectors today such as the economy and in the field of technology is lacking for medical practice, research, and health care systems. As a global forum, the World Health Summit will address those health related issues which challenge us as physicians, scientists, political leaders and those employed in the health care industry. We need cogent and timely responses to the urgent questions arising from world-wide demographic trends, the financing of medical progress and innovation, the understanding of the potentials of medical research and health economy, and to emerging medical issues. Among these are health-related consequences of climate change, international pandemic strategies, and the impact of the financial crisis on global health and health care.

The time is right to start this initiative now. We are in the midst of a severe financial crisis under conditions of global interdependency. The relatedness of economic stability and national and individual health is well known. We have to face the consequences that lie ahead. However, as the world's health sector we represent one of the most stable economic forces. We have to be aware of this potential and the responsibilities which go along with it. We face a rapid development of new technologies and at the same time a closer inter-relationship between medical research and economic forces and technology. We must confront many complex questions: how much medical progress can our health care systems cope with and what are the consequences and implications of that progress? Health is on the public agenda more than ever in the history of mankind but what can we afford? We draw upon and benefit from human and material resources from all over the world – but how can we best sustain and regenerate these valuable and necessary assets?

The World Health Summit has the full support of the French and German governments which initiated this forum. At this time, we invite governments and people from across the globe to join this venture and to establish a platform which will set the broad agenda for future medical research and for structures of health care for all.

The World Health Summit coincides with the 300th anniversary of the Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, whose famous researchers such as Robert Koch and Rudolf Virchow have greatly contributed to the advent of modern medicine. To ensure the success of this meeting, we ask you to join us in this quest as we face the challenges, search for answers, and develop a vision of global proportions.



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