

Press release

Geneva - 23 November 2022

## The GESDA Foundation organizes its scale-up phase 2022-2032

The second editions of the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipation Summit and the GESDA Science Breakthrough Radar® in October 2022 publicly marked the end of the 2019-2022 pilot phase of the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipation Foundation (GESDA).

The GESDA Foundation is now entering its 10-year scale-up phase decided by its Founders, the Swiss and Geneva governments, and is gradually adjusting its organization to this new phase of its existence.

The first news is that Michael Hengartner, President of the Council of the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology, and Michael Møller, former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Director General of the United Nations Office in Geneva between 2013 and 2019, are joining the GESDA Foundation Board.

Michael Hengartner succeeds Matthias Egger, President of the Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). He will also take over the responsibility for the GESDA Academic Forum from the Presidents of the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology in Zurich and Lausanne, Joël Mesot and Martin Vetterli, who were jointly responsible for the pilot phase.

Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, President of the GESDA Foundation, warmly thanks Matthias Egger, Joël Mesot and Martin Vetterli for their commitment to GESDA during these formative years.

In parallel with the appointment of Michael Møller to the Foundation Board, the Diplomacy Forum will now be headed by Ambassador Alexandre Fasel, Special Representative for Science Diplomacy to the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Ambassador Fasel has been the interface between GESDA and FDFA since June 2021. He accompanies the work of the Foundation as a permanent guest of the Board. In his work as Chair of the Diplomacy Forum, Ambassador Fasel will continue the groundwork initiated by Michael Møller from 2019 to give GESDA the diplomatic base it has today in the multilateral and intergovernmental field. The Foundation Board warmly congratulates Mr. Møller on this important result for the future of GESDA. It looks forward to welcoming him to the Board and to continuing his work with him.

The GESDA Foundation is also creating two additional forums in order to become more inclusive of all the stakeholders of international Geneva and the multilateral organizations with which it works.

To this end, GESDA created the Impact Forum to include the philanthropic and entrepreneurial community. It is led by GESDA's Vice Chairman, Patrick Aebischer.

GESDA will then create the Citizens Forum to include the civil society. It will be led by Mamokgethi Phakeng, Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town in South Africa, who launched GESDA's Anticipation Youth Initiative in 2022.

Other current GESDA Board members are Samantha Besson, Professor of International Law of Institutions at Collège de France in Paris and Professor of public international law and European law at the University of Fribourg, Micheline Calmy-Rey, former President and Foreign Minister of the Swiss Confederation, Sir Jeremy Farrar, Director of the Wellcome Trust in London, Fabiola

Gianotti, Director-General of CERN in Geneva and Chorh Chuan Tan, Chief Health Scientist of Singapore.

They are all actively involved in the development of the solutions being developed in GESDA's solution accelerator and the GESDA Science Breakthrough Radar®. Thus, GESDA and the Brocher Foundation will host in Geneva from 28 November to 1 December, under the leadership of Samantha Besson and her partners, a first symposium around the Human Right to Science, the results of which will be one of the pillars of GESDA's work in 2023.

In the coming months, the Board of the Foundation will grow to 15 members.

Due to her workload, Samantha Besson has asked to step down from the Foundation Board in 2023. She will continue to advise GESDA on the human right to science and other international law issues. Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, President of the GESDA Foundation, thanks her warmly for her commitment to the Board during the early years of GESDA.

Finally, Sandro Giuliani, until now Executive Director of the Impact Forum becomes the Chief Executive Officer of GESDA while the Secretary General of the Foundation during the pilot phase, Stéphane Decoutère, joins the Foundation Board he has been the Secretary of since 2019. The Foundation is expected to have about 30 employees within five years.

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### ***About the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator Foundation (GESDA)***

An independent non-profit foundation under Swiss law and a private-public partnership with the Swiss and Geneva authorities, GESDA was created in 2019 to strengthen the impact and innovation capacity of the international community through science and diplomacy anticipation. For more information, please visit the Foundation's website: [www.gesda.global](http://www.gesda.global).

### ***For all questions and interview requests, please contact***

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