

TWAS Rio Declaration

30 September 2025

We, the Fellows of The World Academy of Sciences for the advancement of science in developing countries (TWAS) in attendance at the 32nd TWAS General Meeting being held in conjunction with 17th General Conference of TWAS in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, hereby convey our support for the following declaration:

Noting:

- The global rise of misinformation and disinformation that is undermining science and the search for the truth;
- The dangerous undermining of the evidence-based global scientific consensus reached on major issues impacting the future of the world such as climate change and vaccine safety;
- The replacement of scientific competence by ideology and political loyalty in appointing leaders of state scientific institutions;
- The political attacks on the institutions of science, such as universities, research institutes and non-governmental organisations promoting and undertaking science;
- The ongoing challenge of global inequity in science that perpetuates the brain drain and undermines science in the global South;
- The growing complexity of international policies that are straining North-South scientific collaboration, and the constraints on visas that make it more difficult for students and researcher to study and undertake research abroad, with potential implications for global knowledge exchange; and
- The reduction of funding for international research partnerships in key areas such as health, agriculture, and education, hindering progress on shared global challenges.

And further noting:

- The attacks on multi-lateral institutions, especially those that promote science, human rights and equity;
- The challenges faced by science academies, which are institutions that have played a key role in building science globally;
- Conflicts that destroy schools, hospitals, and universities and starve civilians, including scientists;

- The targeting of scientists, journalists, and civilians in wars and geopolitical conflicts across the globe;

We hereby re-affirm:

- Our unwavering support for the scientific method of deriving the truth;
- Our stance on the central importance of science and scientists being independent and not subjugated to political ideologies; and
- Our belief that science has a key role to play in economic development, prosperity, equity, and sustainability.

We hereby condemn:

- The attack and destruction of academic and scientific institutions in conflict zones, as the long-lasting legacy of violent conflicts;
- The starvation of populations including scientists as a weapon of war in conflicts;
- The abuse of science in surveilling and targeting civilians and journalists in conflicts; and
- Political interference in the institutions of science.

And we hereby commit ourselves to promoting:

- Public awareness of science and its centrality in searching for the truth;
- Scientific evidence and truth to counter misinformation and disinformation;
- The political independence of scientific institutions;
- Science academies as fora for scientific exchange and collective voices for scientists;
- The development and building of the next generation of scientists, including strengthening South-South collaboration, and expanding TWAS fellowship programmes in postgraduate education and research;
- The support of refugee, displaced, and at-risk scientists by availing and sharing laboratories and resources, and creating career opportunities for exiles within the global scientific community;
- Evidence-based policy-making by governments, especially when called upon to provide scientific advice;
- The important role of multi-lateral institutions in promoting and supporting global science;

- The strategic role of education for youth and the promotion of digital inclusion in fostering South-South and South-North collaboration; and
- The key role of science and the scientific community in fostering peace and mutual understanding across all boundaries of class, creed, language, or nationality.

Mover : Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim

Seconders : TWAS Fellows present at the 32nd TWAS General Meeting