World Federation of Engineering Organizations
Fédération Mondiale des Organisations d'Ingénieurs

Prague Declaration of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations

National Infrastructure Roundtables for a Just Transition

The World Federation of Engineering Organizations issued the Prague Declaration, announcing a new initiative to create National Infrastructure Roundtables for a Just Transition that leaves no one behind. Organized by engineers, the National Roundtables will promote climate and disaster resilient infrastructure that is inclusive, multisectoral, and sustainable economically, socially, and environmentally.

Noting that the Paris Climate Agreement calls for "equal resources for mitigation and adaptation," the Roundtables will mitigate climate through low carbon energy projects and promote resilience and adaptation by ensuring quality projects that can withstand the climate disasters that are wreaking destruction around the world.

"What is needed," declared WFEO President Jose Vieira, "is a unified agenda to address climate and poverty, and this new initiative will position the largest engineering organization in the world to take a leadership role in facilitating the Just Transition." President Vieira has already played a major leadership role in developing a partnership with the World Bank for the purpose of integrating the climate agenda with the need to invest in economic development.

President-Elect Mustafa Shehu sees the indispensable role of engineers in the Just Transition. "Engineers are responsible for planning, designing, building, and retrofitting all the infrastructure in the world. Therefore, we have a special obligation to build infrastructure that delivers basic goods and essential services to everybody, leaving no one behind. National Roundtables, led by engineers, but bringing every sector to the leadership table, will elevate the role of engineers to stand in the forefront of the climate and sustainable development movement."

The new initiative will be piloted by WFEO members and partners, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the Pan American Federation for Engineering Organizations (UPADI), the Climate Risk Institute of Canada (CRI), and the Atlas Initiative for Climate Resilient Infrastructure (Atlas).

Ari Herrera, President of UPADI, is leading the way by establishing the idea throughout the Americas where engineering societies are ready to organize the National Roundtables. "We know

that without engineers there is no infrastructure, but we also know that engineers cannot build infrastructure alone. Our national societies will reach out to the multinational development banks and organizations, the private sector finance and insurance and construction companies, scientific groups, women and indigenous organizations, and social and environmental NGOs to speak as a united voice for climate resilient infrastructure as the main lever for the Just Transition."

Michael Sanio, Executive Director of Atlas, will be guiding the establishment of the National Infrastructure Roundtables: "The twin goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, winning the race to net zero and the race to resilience, need an engine to drive the process. Engineers are uniquely qualified to provide the infrastructure that can lift countries, help vulnerable populations, and drive the climate and sustainable development movement."

"New and upgraded infrastructure investment each year is $3.9 trillion, and operations and maintenance add another $5.6 trillion, providing a sufficiently powerful lever to impact the $105 trillion economy. If we get infrastructure right, we can show a sustainable model for the world," says Al Douglas, the President of the Climate Risk Institute.

"After the WFEO success in the T20-G20 Leaders policy arena, which adopted the policy paper "*Catalyzing Investments for Climate and Disaster Resilient Infrastructure*", and the accomplishments in the Indian Conference that preceded the G20 Leaders' Summit in New Delhi, we are well-positioned to build on those achievements, help create multisectoral National Roundtables and foster a new era for engineering and climate resilient infrastructure that benefits humankind across the globe" according to Jose Domingo Pérez, President of the Pan American Academy of Engineering.

KN Gunalan, WFEO's Co-Chairman of the UN Science and Technological Community, Past President of ASCE, and the President of the Atlas Initiative, sees a new vision for engineers in the 21st century. "New challenges call for new thinking and bold leadership. Infrastructure touches everybody and provides the sinews of national strength. Engineers see with professional eyes the cost of poor infrastructure and the urgency of the climate crisis. National Roundtables are needed to create a whole-of-society approach and build climate resilient infrastructure to facilitate a Just Transition that leaves no one behind."

Dr José Vieira

WFEO President

Mustafa Shehu

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