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FUTURE VISIONS: Professor Neal King, IAUP

The International Association of University Presidents (IAUP) is a global organization of university rectors, presidents and vice-chancellors, founded in the UK in 1964. Not-for-profit, non-partisan and apolitical, the IAUP seeks to articulate through its actions the “global voice of higher education” as a moral force to enhance cultural understanding and the pursuit of world peace.

Wholly volunteer, IAUP is the only NGO which has a joint commission with the United Nations, which focuses on disarmament, conflict resolution and peace. It was a key partner in the drafting and launch of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), ten guiding principles for higher education internationally which today has over one thousand signatories. IAUP serves on several UN bodies, including an advisory board for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Through key partnerships with organizations such as the Qatar Foundation, the Institute for International Education (IIE), University World News and the American Council on Education (ACE), as well as collaborations between and amongst its members around the world, IAUP works ceaselessly in pursuit of its mission.

In this way, IAUP manifests its vision for the future of higher education: it is a future which is global, embraces all cultures and serves all members of society. It has at its heart multiple partnerships and collaborative enterprises in the service of preparing emerging generations of global citizens.

NEW PARADIGM OF EDUCATION: Professor Neal King, IAUP

Contemporary approaches to higher education are increasingly less and less relevant to today’s – and tomorrow’s – global society and the global citizens who will lead and serve it. Today’s structures have evolved regionally, many in response to colonization, many framed and defined by cultural and faith traditions in their parts of the world.

Today’s structures favor the more economically privileged, males and the “first world.” New paradigms will need to be designed to embrace all social strata, both genders and both emerging and wealthy societies equally. Dramatically shifting demographics, emerging generations raised on social media and other rapidly evolving technologies, an increasingly fragile shared environment, and the complex demands of a global economy all demand a different approach to higher education. The results will be revolutionary, distributing knowledge, power, wealth and opportunity in unprecedented ways.

Challenges include overcoming ancient prejudices rooted in cultural and academic tradition, the need for a professoriate which thinks, teaches and acts in dramatically different fashion from today, and the need to reverse today’s trend toward greater and greater disparity in income, net worth and the exercise of power.