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Mamphela Ramphele and Sandrine Dixson Declève appointed Co-Presidents of the Club of Rome

The Club of Rome appointed two women for the first time in its history to co-lead the organization at its AGM, which took place alongside the Club’s 50th anniversary conference in Rome, Italy. Mamphela Ramphele (South Africa) and Sandrine Dixson Declève (Belgium) were appointed Co-Presidents. The Club of Rome first gained international attention with its best selling report “The Limits to Growth” in 1972. It has continued to provide a platform for leading scientists, economists, policy and business leaders to collaborate and promote leading edge thinking.

Its new co-presidents are expected to enhance the Club’s efforts to translate thought leadership into action as a response to growing ecological tipping points and the urgency in catalysing a new human civilization in harmony with nature. In practice the Co-Presidents will further collaboration with civil society, policy makers and the private sector and expand membership to more youth and representation from the South.

Dr. Mamphela Ramphele a medical doctor, author and outspoken advocate for human rights, serving as a Trustee of the Nelson Mandela Foundation and as an active citizen in her home country. After co-founding the Black Consciousness movement in her native South Africa in the 70s with Steve Biko, enduring a personal ban under the apartheid regime, Dr. Ramphele went on to forge a stellar career. She was previously one of four Managing Directors of the World Bank in Washington DC, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town and led South African political party, Agang SA.

“The Club of Rome ought to be a catalyst for the emergence of a new human civilization in harmony with nature, by leveraging the complementary innovative capacities of the network of networks of its members. In that context it is important to me to particularly influence engagement from my own continent, Africa. We want to generate a new way of becoming a prosperous, sustainable continent which celebrates human dignity and common good”, says Mamphela Ramphele.

Sandrine Dixson Declève has spent nearly three decades in European and international policy and business leadership with a particular focus on EU and international climate change, environmental, sustainability, green growth and energy. She is a respected facilitator and lecturer on climate change, green growth, conventional and sustainable energy, and has worked for and advised international organisations such as the UN, OECD, OPEC, European Institutions as well as HRH The Prince of Wales, and respected CEOs of some of the world’s largest companies. She continues to serve as a special advisor for C suite clients, governments, Academic Institutes and non governmental organisations.

“The latest IPCC report is a stark wake up call that the existential threat posed by climate change means ‘business as usual’ is no longer an option. We have to stop talking about incremental actions and start promoting a vision for transformation. The Club of Rome will take a leading role in pushing the boundaries for feasible solutions and actions that can deliver economic prosperity and the security of people, nations and the planet in a time-frame consistent with the science.”, says Sandrine Dixson Declève.

The two co-presidents are charged with leading member-driven, concrete actions over the coming years, including the impending launch of a Climate Emergency Plan agreed at the 50th Anniversary Conference (October 16th-18th).

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About the Club of Rome:

In 1968, a network of entrepreneurs, diplomats, scientists and economists was created in Rome on the initiative of the Italian industrialist Aurelio Peccei and Alexander King, then Science Director of the OECD. The group was united in their concern about the future of humanity and the planet and assumed responsibility to make politicians and decision-makers worldwide aware of the most crucial issues of the future. The Club of Rome was born.

In the first report on the predicament of humanity, “The Limits to Growth”, the Club warned of unlimited material growth and uninhibited consumption in a world of limited resources: if human activity was to continue in the same way as between 1900 and 1972, humanity would be about to overshoot the carrying capacity of planet earth by the end of the century.

50 years later, there is no doubt that the ecological footprint of humanity substantially exceeds its natural limits every year. The concerns of the Club of Rome have not lost their relevance: 50 years ago, the Club of Rome stated that it was both possible and necessary to alter growth trends and establish new conditions for a just and sustainable world offering stability and global balance. Since then, more than 40 reports to the Club of Rome have been published, and 35 National Associations have been founded, in which these issues are raised, for the benefit of decision-makers and civil society.

The Club’s recent report ‘Come On! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population and the Destruction of the Planet’, was coauthored by Prof. Ernst von Weizsäcker and Dr. Anders Wijkman, with 35 members of the Club. It proposes a positive and realistic agenda for the future and argues that we now have sufficient knowledge to achieve the necessary sustainable economic transformation, preserving the world’s natural environments and stocks of resources, whilst assuring human well-being in the long term.

The Club’s 100 members, world renowned experts in their respective disciplines, are still devoted to the founding principles of the Club: A commitment for a sustainable future of humanity from a holistic, systemic and long-term perspective. The Club’s central argument is that the global challenges facing humanity are interconnected and cannot be tackled as singular, isolated events.