

June 13, 2022

Laudatio to Professor Ilona **Kickbusch** nominated as SSPH+ Honorary Fellow

Dear Professor Kickbusch,

Antoine Flahault is really sorry not to be able to join you this evening, due to COVID quarantine, but has asked to warmly thank who has kindly accepted to read the laudatio on his behalf.

Dear Ilona,

We know each other for decades, and that was a long time before I came to Geneva. We often attended same meetings, conferences and sometimes teaching in the same academic programmes, either to doctoral candidates or master students. I remember and I am grateful you instrumentally supported my application as candidate to chair the new Institute of Global Health, at the University of Geneva. You spontaneously acted as my faithful friend, and I know you acted as well for many other in this room tonight and elsewhere in our community.

Your records are impressive, and you probably do not fully know to which extent we do appreciate your career all over Europe. We learn from your activism I want to say, since you always and repeatedly stand up to defend a vision of public health we all share here, which is founded on equity, respect, and freedom, centered to the needs for the most vulnerable individuals of our humanity.

You were the Founder and Chair of the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. When at this position, you always maintained complementarity and warm and friendship relations with all the faculties of your neighbor Institute of global health I am chairing. At the Graduate Institute, you demonstrated an extraordinary leadership, the only one succeeding to convene at the same stage, prime ministers and ministers of health from the Global South and the Global North, CEOs from international organizations, activists from the civil society, experts from our academic community, and the private sector, without discrimination,

with inclusion, and without being naive. You are always very demanding when organizing, moderating and chairing these sessions. You always address the most relevant and topical issues, and you always maintain a respectful and warm tone and spirit. You have to know the role model you play on all your colleagues, and first on myself. It is not flattery, you are exceptionally talented and skilled in this domain, and I needed to acknowledge it here tonight.

You have an endless résumé. If I was not allocated 3 or 4 minutes for this laudatio at the end of a wonderful but long afternoon with our Faculty, students and young researchers, I would have announced that I was just starting to list your journey in global health. But don't worry too much Suzanne and Milo, I will now do my best to summarize the long list of incredible achievements Ilona have completed in the most recent years.

Ilona, you are member of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board, the WHO Council on the Economic of Health for All. You are Council Chair to the World Health Summit in Berlin, the WHS we were often involved together. You are vice-president of the European Health Forum Gastein (for which I am jealous, because I never succeeded to join its board!). You have been instrumental in helping scheduling global health at the German G7, G20 and EU presidencies.

You chaired the international advisory board for the development of the German global health strategy and advised on the establishment of the WHO Hub on Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence.

You publish often and widely in the best journals and serve on various commissions and boards. For instance, you initiated the list of 300 women leaders in global health. You are the program chair of the leaders in health network SCIANA. You co-chair the Lancet Financial Times Commission on "Governing health futures 2030: growing up in a digital world."

Professor Ilona Kickbusch, you have also had a distinguished career with the World Health Organization. You were key instigator of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and WHO's Healthy Cities

Network. You were the director of the Global Health Division at Yale University School of Public Health and responsible for the first Fulbright Programme on global health. I remember that your Dean at that time was Mike Merson, a friend and mentor in global health.

You received incalculable number of prizes and recognitions. You are German by citizenship and you have been nominated honorary professor at the Charité, Berlin. You have also been awarded the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesverdienstkreuz) and I will end by this distinction I feel so well deserved, you received the WHO Medal for contributions to global health.

Please, dear colleagues, do not blame me. I am not responsible. The only one who is responsible to have made this speech so long is Ilona Kickbusch. She has immediately accepted to become one of our SSPH+ Honorary Fellow, receiving tonight the highest distinction in the Swiss academic public health community.

Ilona, merci et bravo !

I propose you to applaude and thank her.