



MINISTER OF EDUCATION,  
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Greetings Dr. Dua

I would like to begin with declaring my pleasure with the work that the WHO is initiating and relates to the nervous system. The establishment of the Brain Health Unit and the work which is to be carried out under the guidance of the Unit as regards on international action plans and future policies for the benefit of the nervous system, is extremely pressing. I would also like to express my pleasure with the report of Dr. Tetros Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of WHO, A73/5 which states e.g. the following:

(f) fostering strategic approaches to research on neurological disorders increasing the attention given to brain health and neurological disorders in national and global research agendas; using artificial intelligence, precision medicine and other novel technologies to consolidate fragmented research results and identify new treatment options with potential to cure more neurological disorders.

In recent years, the Icelandic authorities have been drawing the attention of the appropriate international bodies to how slowly progress is being made in finding a cure for spinal cord injury and other neurological disorders which cause paralyses and have recommended that a campaign be initiated to find a cure. The effort involves collating international neurological research data bases with the assistance of AI and thereby merge research fragments, collect together underused knowledge and seek a shared pattern within the contents of the data bases that could signpost the way to finding possible research avenues that could lead to success. Our points of focus, therefore, harmonise with those of Dr. Ghebreyesus regarding achieving a possible cure, as can be seen above.

We have pointed out that there exists a great deal of underused scientific knowledge which could come to light if the overall body of neurological research were to be reviewed fully. It was, therefore, a matter of some pleasure to see how the nations of the world joined hands to combat COVID-19 and began, among other things, to re-examine older research and medications. The efforts revealed that some knowledge did exist, including medicinal products that proved to be effective at treating the disease to some extent. And now the world has unequivocally joined hands to find a vaccine against the virus.

Greetings Dr. Dua

It would be an immensely welcome move if the world could also join together under the guidance of WHO and achieve a breakthrough toward curing paralysis. A breakthrough that is needed so much. I wish you well in the important work that you do.

Sincerely,

Lilja D. Alfreðsdóttir

Minister of Education, Science and Culture

Copy sent to: Dr. Dévora Kestel, Director Department of Mental Health and Substance Use.  
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