News Release

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Today ' s Challenges Require New Leadership

11 September 2013

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- Leadership today requires convincing people to change destructive habits.
- Economic growth depends on greater empowerment and participation of women.
- Leaders must clearly communicate purposes and priorities.
- For more information about the Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2013, please visit: http://www.weforum.org/newchampions

Dalian, People ' s Republic of China, 11 September 2013 Today ' s pressing economic, political and environmental challenges will require new leadership skills. " We will see more change over the next decade than we have seen in the last 30 years, " predicted Dennis Meadows, Professor Emeritus and Director, Institute for Policy and Social Science, University of New Hampshire, USA. While previous civilizations have faced existential threats, today ' s challenges are different because we are threatening the Earth ' s physical capacity to sustain human life, he warned. Leaders today must have the ability to see what human habits need changing and convince people to make those changes, " even if change will not make everyone happy. "

Politicians focus too much on process, and not enough on goals, observed Alexander De Croo, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Pensions of Belgium, Global Agenda Council on Ageing. " Political leaders should keep people focused on goals. " That is easier when progress towards goals is achieved through small, manageable projects.

Hu Shuli, Editor-in-Chief, Caixin Media, People ' s Republic of China, urged political leaders to think about " doing the right thing, and not dwelling on the difficulties. "

Leadership in today ' s environment of rapid technological change and a " multispeed economy " is " much more complex, " said Rich Lesser, Global Chief Executive and President, The Boston Consulting Group, USA. Leaders in the 21st century must clearly communicate " purpose and priorities across the organization " . The new leadership paradigm is creating " horizontal freedom within a framework " .

Greater women ' s empowerment and participation in political and economic life are critical. Economic growth needed for poverty reduction and job creation will stall without greater women ' s empowerment, predicted Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer and Member of the Board, Facebook, USA. The progress of women advancing to senior positions in business and politics in the United States and China has been stuck at low percentages for decades, she noted. Further progress will require changed attitudes at cultural, company and individual levels. " There are differences between women and men, but leadership ability is not a biological difference between them. Rather than call confident, assertive women and girls ' bossy ' , we should view them as having executive leadership skills, " she added.

Over 1,600 participants from 90 countries are taking part in the seventh Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Dalian on 11-13 September. The Meeting is held in close collaboration with the Government of the People ' s Republic of China with the support of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

Under the theme Meeting the Innovation Imperative, the Meeting features an intensive three-day programme to explore the innovation imperative under four thematic sub-themes: Transforming Industry Ecosystems; Unleashing Innovation; Building Societal Resilience; and Connecting Markets.

- Follow the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions at http://wef.ch/amnc13
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