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IAPS Statement on Danish government's decision to reduce International Student opportunities

Scientific and engineering progress is dependent on openness, transparency, and the free flow of ideas. These ideas are paramount to the success and growth of all peoples, regardless of their nationality.

Therefore, we hold as evident that the Higher Education and Science Ministry's decision to reduce, by 1000 to 1200, the number of international students in their English-language university education programs in the sciences - including courses on engineering, climate change, biotechnology, financing and innovation and IT - is extremely misguided and will set a dangerous precedent. Added to the reality of some courses being closed down are the fears of danish students losing opportunities to study abroad as a result of a potential equivalent response of other countries to the danish government's decision.

Denmark has a long and storied history of being a dynamic and innovative scientific enterprise. Danish scientists have contributed greatly to the scientific understanding of every major field of study. Additionally, Denmark's labour markets are progressive in developing and sustaining successful international collaborations. It would be a mischaracterisation to imply that Denmark is not substantially affected by its international relationships, which begin with its international students.

Because a scientific breakthrough in one place, by one scientist or research group is, as should be, a scientific breakthrough in all places, for the whole scientific community, the optimal, most natural and universally desirable path for scientific and technological development requires that cooperation, communication and the sharing of knowledge in Science, much like the laws of Nature it aspires to unravel, face no geographic barriers. This makes clear that the educational, scientific and cultural merits of international student programs, as stepping stones to research, stand on their own. In addition, the opposition to the cuts by representatives of students, universities and industry in Denmark, which have highlighted the benefits of international students to the danish workforce and economy, shows the arguments of financial or economic order on which the cuts where based are senseless.

As an association that represents over 66,000 Physics students across over 50 countries, IAPS has consistently encouraged international collaboration, particularly in educational opportunities for young scientists. We know that championing safe and responsible scientific research is crucial for scientific advancement, national prosperity, and international security. We become greater as a society when we open our doors to collaboration and opportunities to exchange our diverse ideas and perspectives.

We, thus, hope that Denmark continues its historic, longstanding practice of openness in their research and educational programs, reflective of the borderless cooperative spirit that defines the global scientific community. Building diverse international scientific collaborations is imperative for the 21st century. We stand ready to support our international members towards this end.

The Executive Committee of the International Association of Physics Students

The International Association of Physics Students (IAPS), as its Charter states, is an international, student-run educational association, which aims to encourage physics students in their academic and professional growth by developing an ever-growing worldwide community within which peaceful relations are established in a collaborative, diverse and friendly social environment.