

Humanity & Inclusion appoints a new Federal Chairperson

Lyon, 18 June. On Saturday 16 June, HI's Federal Board of Trustees elected Jean-Noël Dargnies as its new Chairperson. After a career in industry and higher education, he is taking over from Jacques Tassi, whose third term as Chairperson ended on Saturday.

Jean-Noël Dargnies takes over from Jacques Tassi

After training as an engineer, Jean-Noël Dargnies worked in industry for many years, but this father of five spent most of his career in the world of education. In 2010, he took over as head of Sainte Geneviève, a higher education establishment known for the quality of its preparation of students for France's top-tier universities or "grandes écoles". Motivated by the values of this institution – mutual assistance, solidarity and service – which he opened up to more underprivileged students, it was a natural next step for him to engage in humanitarian work with HI.

"There were two things in particular about this great organisation that touched and attracted me. First, its unique social mission alongside vulnerable people, through which it seeks to make them actors in their own destiny and help them regain their rightful dignity. Second, its ability to call itself into question and modernise its organisation and working methods."

"My visits to the teams in Kenya, Mali and DRC confirmed my belief that HI's actions in the field are remarkable. I am very happy to be joining this big team. It does fantastic work and it does it well."

Jean-Noël Dargnies is taking over from Jacques Tassi who is retiring as Chairperson after devoting almost 18 years to HI.

Jacques Tassi: 18 years of service to HI

During his 18 years with HI, Jacques Tassi played a key role in all of the organisation's major developments. Elected Treasurer in 2000 and then Chairperson in 2006, he helped create HI's Federation, the supranational organisation that today federates 8 national associations and runs projects in around 60 countries. He also supported the professionalization of its teams and helped develop the organisational culture of HI. Today, HI is globally recognised as a leading NGO. Strongly attached to the organisation's social mission, Jacques Tassi worked to develop its expertise and its missions for and with people with disabilities and vulnerable people.

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Supporting HI's 10-year strategy

HI's newly elected Chairperson, Jean-Noël Dargnies, intends to pursue work in progress on the organisation's 2016-2025 strategy alongside the Global Managing Director, Manuel Patrouillard.

"At a time when crises are creating a vertiginous increase in the needs of the most vulnerable, we must be capable of scaling up our action and becoming even more efficient. The role of the Board of Trustees is to support HI's executive management and teams to achieve these goals".

"I consider it my duty to be reachable. I have set myself the objective of being a Chairperson who is close to everybody, attentive to everybody, who brings everybody together."

And there will certainly be many challenges to meet. Today, HI works in 63 countries, runs 386 projects, employs almost 3,300 staff and has an annual budget of over 178 million euros.

NOTE TO EDITORS

Interviews: Jean-Noël Dargnies / Jacques Tassi

Photos available

About HI

HI is an independent charity which has spent the last 35 years working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster. We work tirelessly alongside people with disabilities and vulnerable people to help meet their basic needs, improve their living conditions and promote respect for their dignity and fundamental rights. Since HI was founded in 1982, our organisation has set up programmes in more than sixty countries and worked in many emergency situations. Our network of eight national associations (Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and USA) mobilises resources, co-manages projects around the world and promotes HI's principles and actions. As one of the six founding members of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, HI was a co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize and was also awarded the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize in 2011. This prize is awarded annually to individuals or organisations doing extraordinary work to alleviate human suffering.

On 24th January 2018, the global Handicap International network became Humanity & Inclusion. This network is composed of national associations which are called "Handicap International" in Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland, and "Humanity & Inclusion" in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. It is also composed of a Federation which implements programmes in the field in around sixty countries under the names of "Humanity & Inclusion", "Handicap International" or "Atlas Logistique".

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