

To: SSSP Board of Directors and the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee
From: SSSP Transnational Initiatives Committee, John Dale (Chair)
Cc: Héctor Delgado and Michele Koontz

Date: July, 27, 2017

Re: Report from the Transnational Initiatives Committee

This year marks an important milestone for the SSSP's formerly ad hoc Transnational Initiatives Committee. The Transnational Initiatives Committee was formed as an *ad hoc* committee by the Board of Directors in 2011. In light of the important ongoing activity of this *ad hoc* committee, and recognition of the committee's dual purpose of enhancing the SSSP membership's understanding of transnational dimensions of social problems, and increasing the active participation within the SSSP of scholars, activists, and the association's members and advocates who work and reside beyond the United States and Canada — and especially those who do so in countries outside the global North, the Board of Directors proposed at the SSSP Annual Meeting in 2016, held in Seattle, that this *ad hoc* committee be made a standing committee of the SSSP.

At this same 2016 Meeting, the Board of Directors approved a proposal by Executive Officer Héctor Delgado to explore a partnership with the American Association for the Advancement of Science – Human Rights Coalition (AAAS-HRC) by becoming a member organization. The AAAS is the largest and oldest professional association of scientists in the world, and the HRC has formed a working partnership with the AAAS to promote the human right to science. Although we could not have known so last August, this year has turned out to be an especially busy year for the AAAS-HRC as the human right to scientific knowledge has come under threat from the executive branch of the Federal Government. The SSSP Board of Directors voted to have Executive Officer Héctor Delgado and John Dale serve as SSSP Human Rights Liaisons to the AAAS-HRC. In this capacity, they were tasked with attending two AAAS-HRC conferences, held on January and July of 2017, in Washington, DC. They approved a one-time budget for \$4,000 to cover the cost of one-year's membership in the AAAS-HRC, as well as conference registration fees, travel and lodging expenses for the SSSP Human Rights Liaisons. [See **“Update on the AAAS-HRC Initiative,”** beginning on page 5 of this report.]

Following the 2016 SSSP Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors took up unfinished business from the 2016 Annual Meeting, namely, (1) Continue Discussion for On-going Video Conference Funding; and (2) Continue Discussion for Ongoing \$10,000 Commitment to Bring International Graduate Students to the Annual Meeting.

The second item regarding funding was partially addressed. In an e-mailed memo from Michele Koontz, John Dale was informed that they voted to approve the creation of a standing Transnational Initiatives Committee, and *approved funding for the Committee for two years at \$4,000 each year*. Additional unfinished business, however, was not explicitly addressed,

The first item concerning concerns making funds available at annual meetings to SSSP Divisions for panels that plan to include special presenters from countries who are unable to attend the

meeting, but who would greatly enhance the Society by participating. For example, given President Trump's recent immigration ban that categorically prevents people from some countries from entering the United States, it is conceivable that some would-be conference participants are unable to physically attend. This video-conference funding could enable persons whose papers were accepted, but who could attend due to the subsequently enacted immigration ban, to participate electronically in real time. In December of 2015, the Board of Directors approved a one-time funding request for the estimated \$707.44 (up to \$1,000 if final costs rise) in Seattle and to discuss the Transnational Committee's request for ongoing video-conferencing funding in Seattle. While the Board of Directors did approve funding for the Transnational Initiatives Committee for two years at \$4,000 each year, the Board didn't discuss ongoing video-conferencing. However, given that we did not acquire approval for video-conference funding at the 2017 Montreal Meeting, and didn't receive any requests from Divisions for video-conferencing for the 2016 meeting, the Transnational Initiatives Committee decided not to ask for money again from the Board this year. We do, however, plan to ask the chairs of each Division — prior to the Montreal meetings — to think about how they might be able to develop special panels for Philadelphia that might benefit from this technology.

With regard to the \$4,000 that the Transnational Initiatives Committee received from the Board, it was my (mistaken) understanding, as Chair of the (formerly) Ad Hoc Transnational Initiatives Committee that the first year's budget was referencing the same \$4,000 that had been approved at the tail of end of the Board Meeting for the AAAS-HRC one-year exploration initiative. I only discovered, in Spring of 2017, that these represented separate allocations of \$4,000 for 2016-2017. Thus, in discussion with Michele Koontz and Héctor Delgado, the Transnational Initiatives Committee agreed to return the first year's allocation of \$4,000.

I accept responsibility for this misunderstanding and lost opportunity. However, I should also point out, that this year, with the Ad Hoc Committee (on which I formerly served as Chair) now dissolved, and with this year's formation of a standing Committee, still not officially finalized, there was not only some confusion, but also little time to organize a meaningful use of these funds. The Transnational Initiatives Committee will definitely plan, following approval of our new Committee members at the August 2017 meeting [more on this below], to use its \$4,000 funding allocation to organize a special panel and event for the 2018 Annual Meeting in Philadelphia.

With regard to the formation of the new standing Transnational Initiatives Committee, we have made significant progress this year. Serving as Chair of the formerly ad hoc Transnational Initiatives Committee for the past several years, I was tasked with submitting new by-laws, which were approved and read as follows:

ARTICLE VI, SECTION 29. Transnational Initiatives Committee

The Transnational Initiatives Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, a Chairperson-elect and four members, of whom at least two must be international members, each serving three-year staggered terms. In addition to the appointed members the Executive Officer shall serve as an ex officio member.

Initially, the Chairperson and one committee member will serve a one-year term; the Chairperson-elect and one committee member will serve a two-year term; and two committee members will serve a three-year term. Thereafter replacements will be appointed as terms expire. Unexpired terms may be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors. The committee members shall serve three-year staggered terms so that at least two members are appointed each year. The President-Elect shall nominate and the Board of Directors shall appoint a Chairperson-elect from among the committee members who have served on the committee at least one-year prior to his or her appointment and who shall serve as Chairperson of the committee during the year that the President-Elect serves as President.

Consistent with criteria stipulated in the by-laws governing all standing committees, the Transnational Initiatives Committee shall be reconstituted each year with a turnover membership of at least one-third, and no member may serve on the same committee of the Society, whether by election or appointment, for more than three consecutive years.

Following criteria specified by the Board of Directors, the Committee shall have the responsibility of identifying issues, promoting collaboration, proposing courses of action, and/or organizing events and activities that enhance the SSSP membership's understanding of transnational dimensions of social problems, and increase the active participation within the SSSP of scholars, activists, and the association's members and advocates who work and reside beyond the United States and Canada — and especially those who do so in countries outside the global North. Monies for this fund shall be allocated at the discretion of the Board of Directors in consultation with the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee.

In addition, and subsequent to the approval of the new bylaws, 2017-18 President Luis A. Fernandez and President-Elect Nancy J. Mezey separately asked John Dale to consider serving as Chair of the Transnational Initiatives Committee in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, respectively. He agreed to do so.

Shortly afterward, President-Elect Luis A. Fernandez and Executive Officer Héctor Delgado asked John Dale, now in his capacity as Chair (or Chair-Elect) of the standing Transnational Initiatives Committee for 2017-2018 to secure members to serve on the Transnational Initiatives Committee. Below is an excerpt from the Operations Manual that speaks to the committee's duties.

Excerpt from the Operations Manual:

IV. N. Transnational Initiatives Committee

The Transnational Initiatives Committee consists of a Chair, a Chair-Elect, and four members, of whom at least two must be international members, appointed to staggered three-year terms. In addition to the appointed members the Executive Officer serves as an ex-officio member.

Initially, the Chair and one committee member will serve a one-year term; the Chair-Elect and one committee member will serve a two-year term; and two committee members will

serve a three-year term. Thereafter replacements will be appointed as terms expire. Unexpired terms may be filled by appointment by the Board of Directors. The committee members shall serve three-year staggered terms so that at least two members are appointed each year. The President-Elect shall nominate and the Board of Directors shall appoint a Chair-Elect from among the committee members who have served on the committee at least one-year prior to his or her or their appointment and who shall serve as Chair of the committee during the year that the President-Elect serves as President.

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Following criteria specified by the Board of Directors, the committee has the responsibility of identifying issues, promoting collaboration, proposing courses of action, and/or organizing events and activities that enhance the SSSP membership's understanding of transnational dimensions of social problems, and increase the active participation within the SSSP of scholars, activists, and the association's members and advocates who work and reside beyond the United States and Canada — and especially those who do so in countries outside the global North. Monies for this fund shall be allocated at the discretion of the Board of Directors in consultation with the Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee. **[End of Excerpt]**

In addition, the Board of Directors recommended that President-Elect Luis A. Fernandez solicit (from within committees) nominations of others who are interested in serving on and as chairs of committees throughout the Society, specifically with an eye toward ethnically diverse memberships and engagement with dynamics of privilege and power. The Board of Directors urged all divisions and committees of the Society to address issues of privilege within their capacities which may include collecting data, analyzing process, and agitating for change within the Society. They also included information regarding Racial/Ethnic Identification and Gender on a spreadsheet of the SSSP's membership for this purpose, but also noted that not every member has provided this information. Michele Koontz also provided John Dale with a list of members who had expressed an interest in participating as members of the Transnational Initiatives Committee.

Therefore, drawing from these spreadsheets, and with the Board of Directors' guidelines in mind, John Dale identified and proposed four committee members, of whom two are international members. Consistent with the Operations Manual and the new standing Committee's by-laws, John Dale solicited by e-mail interest among qualified members still willing and able to serve, and proposed the names and terms of office below to the incoming President Luis A. Fernandez, meeting the following terms of office should be as follows: one committee member will serve a one-year term (2017-2018); one committee member will serve a two-year term (2017-2019); and two committee members will serve a three-year term (2017-2020). All of the people listed below have agreed to serve if approved by the Board.

Proposed Transnational Initiatives Committee Members – 2017-2018

John Dale, George Mason University, Chair (2017-2019)

Fatime Güneş, Anadolu University* (2017-2020)
Lynette Chua, National University of Singapore* (2017-2020)
Yvonne Braun, University of Oregon, (2017-2019)
Bhavani Arabandi, U.S. Department of Labor, (2017-2018)
* Denotes Non-U.S.-based members

Action Item One:

The Board is to review/vote on the Committee on Committees report on August 13, 2017.

Should the Board approve these proposed Committee Members listed above, they are prepared to meet shortly after the conclusion of the Annual Meeting in a conference call to discuss and begin organizing plans for the 2018 Philadelphia Meeting.

Action Items Two and Three (listed as separate proposals/items to be voted on):

In addition to this list of members, if approved, John Dale would like to propose a by-laws amendment to change the committee's composition for the future.

Proposal One:

He proposes that we have a graduate student representative (a one-year non-voting position) serve as a member of the Transnational Initiatives Committee. *The rationale* is that the Transnational Initiatives Committee would like to have a dedicated person (preferably who is a graduate student) serving on the committee work with our growing graduate student membership. Past transnational initiatives have benefitted over the past few years from their inclusion, as reported in previous Committee Reports to the Board of Directors.

Proposal Two:

He also proposes that we allow a role for members who wish to serve for one-year stints as non-voting advisors to the committee. *The rationale* is that the Transnational Initiatives Committee does not want to discourage members who are interested in contributing to our committee from doing so, and the Committee could (and in the past has) benefitted from such input.

Update on the AAAS-HRC Initiative

While the SSSP's participation in the AAAS-HRC is not directly tied to the Transnational Initiatives Committee, it does seem that it will be a source of future opportunities that the Transnational Initiatives Committee plans to draw on in its effort to fulfil its purpose: "the Committee has the responsibility of identifying issues, promoting collaboration, proposing courses of action, and/or organizing events and activities that enhance the SSSP membership's understanding of transnational dimensions of social problems, and increase the active participation within the SSSP of scholars, activists, and the association's members and advocates

who work and reside beyond the United States and Canada — and especially those who do so in countries outside the global North.”

On January 26-27, 2017, SSSP Human Rights Liaisons Héctor Delgado and John Dale attended the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition Meeting at the AAAS headquarters in Washington, DC. Participants, including scientists of all disciplines, discussed the role of science and technology in upholding the human right to water and the implications of the human rights framework for scientists, engineers, and health professionals who work to improve access to safe, affordable water supplies. Sessions highlighted examples of actionable scientific research (including research from the social sciences) that is contributing to human rights-based water policies. Panelists also shared models for collaborative partnerships with frontline communities and activists. For example, one panel, entitled, “Envisioning Socially Just Public Engagement: An Important Intersection of Scientific Responsibility and Human Rights,” argued that

Collaboration with the public is essential for scientists and engineers whose work informs decisions, practices, and policies that impact public health, safety, and wellbeing. However, the skills needed to collaborate with communities in socially just ways are rarely taught in STEM 3 curricula. In this workshop, participants will learn about basic principles that can be used to guide the design of scientific and engineering interventions, which are beneficial and elevating to all parties involved. The workshop will draw from anthropology, feminist philosophy, and environmental justice work, as well as a teaching module titled “Learning to Listen” that was developed as part of a National Science Foundation (NSF) sponsored project in engineering ethics education. “Learning to Listen,” a training that was distinguished by the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) as exemplary, challenges students and practitioners alike to listen carefully to the communities they serve in order to recognize the technical and moral relevance of diverse, expert and non-expert, voices.

A plenary session, “What is the Role of Scientists in Supporting the Human Rights to Water,” featured Catherine Flowers of the Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise, Yanna Lambrinidou of Virginia Tech, Sacoby Wilson of University of Maryland, and Moderator Andrew Rosenberg of the Union of Concerned Scientists. Drawing from case studies, they addressed the benefits of collaboration, key elements necessary for building effective partnerships, critical concerns for defining research questions and advocacy goals, and the ethical responsibilities of researchers and policy makers. Specifically, they discussed the following important questions:

- What does the power differential between scientists and communities mean for just scientific involvement in the promotion and support for the human right to water?
- Do scientists and engineers have more to offer than technical advice and information?
- Can they (and should they) facilitate citizen empowerment?
- Is there a role for the scientific community in citizen transformation and healing following these types of injustice?

Héctor and John also attended an organizational members meeting in which they were able to introduce to other organizational members the important work of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. By the time of this meeting, barely a week after the Presidential Inauguration

in Washington, it was clear to all of these organizations that a more general human rights to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications (Article 27 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights) was coming under attack from the incoming administration.

The AAAS-HRC has been working on an initiative to better define the meaning of this right. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has not adopted a general comment on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress though it has adopted general comments on Article 15(1)(a) and (c). In 2007, UNESCO launched a process intended to inform the development of a general comment, culminating in 2009 with the development of the Venice Statement which provides a preliminary assessment of the meaning and content of the right. Among the next steps identified, the Venice Statement called for the participation of “the scientific and academic communities” in elucidating the meaning of the right, raising awareness about the right, its implementation and the monitoring of its realization.

In April 2010, the Board of Directors of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) adopted a statement on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, undertaking to engage the scientific community in defining the content of the right and determining its application to a diverse range of scientific disciplines and to contribute these findings to the UN process of defining the right. Now, working with the HRC, which includes opportunities for organizational members like the SSSP, they have formed an AAAS-HRC Indicators Group to develop an international framework for Article 15. John Dale was approached by the Chair of the Committee Brain Gran (who was just elected Chair of the American Sociological Association’s Human Rights Section) to work with this group, which he has been doing through monthly conference calls since January. The next face-to face meeting will take place during one of the sessions at the July 27-28 Meeting of the AAAS-HRC, at which Professor Mikel Mancisidor will join our meeting. Professor Mancisidor is a member of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. He has taken the lead in drafting a General Comment on the right to science. The work of the Indicators Group may help Professor Mancisidor's work.

Héctor and John left the first conference with the impression that the SSSP can surely benefit from its membership in the AAAS-HRC, and that we have much to contribute to the work of the other organizations comprising the membership. Shortly after the January Meeting, Jessica Wyndham, who has been our primary contact as coordinator of the AAAS-HRC, approached us about having the SSSP participate in an NSF-funded survey that the AAAS is conducting. The survey is an international one, that, in the words of the AAAS, focuses on:

“the views of scientists and engineers with regard to their social responsibilities. As you are probably aware, there is currently no consensus on the nature of the social responsibilities of scientists and engineers. The survey we are developing is intended to document empirically what scientists and engineers identify as their responsibilities to society, the sources of their beliefs on the issue, the opportunities or challenges that affect their ability to fulfill their social responsibilities, and how their views on their responsibilities differ or are similar across disciplines, sector, age groups, gender, sources of support for their work, institutions, and region/country where they work. As such, the survey will inform ongoing global discussions on the social responsibilities of scientists and engineers, and point to ways that consideration of

social responsibilities might be integrated into the education and training of scientists and engineers. The survey instrument will be available in the six official languages of the United Nations: Arabic, English, French, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish."

Héctor Delgado approached the Board of Directors to seek their approval before we agreed to participate. In his correspondence with the Board, he explained,

As indicated above, they would like to include the SSSP in the survey, which I believe is an important one (perhaps more than ever now) and think we should consider seriously participating, along many other organizations like ours who have already agreed to participate. I ran this by our Research Review Committee (Donileen Loseke, Valerie Leiter, and me), and they too recommend that we participate. Attached is Jessica Wyndham's e-mail/letter (AAAS) detailing what our participation would entail were we to agree to do it. By the way, this is separate from our membership in the coalition.

The SSSP Board of Directors approved our participation:

Approved: 15 votes

Did not approve: 0 votes

Did not vote: 2 board members

Abstained: 0 votes

Héctor then informed Jessica Wyndham, AAAS, of the Board's decision.

Héctor and John also will be attending the July 27-28, 2017 Meeting of the AAAS-HRC in Washington, DC, and will submit a subsequent report on these proceedings to the Board of Directors. They will be seeking to identify tangible opportunities and resources from which the SSSP, its Divisions and Committees, and members can benefit, and to which they may be interested in contributing.

Respectfully submitted,

John Dale, Chair, SSSP Transnational Initiatives Committee