

## Press Release



Partners for the  
International Year of Chemistry 2011

### **Chemistry's future takes centre stage at International Year of Chemistry closing ceremony in Brussels**

*Young professionals present their vision of chemistry and how it will help shape the world in 2050*

BRUSSELS, December 1, 2011 – More than 800 people from 70 countries descended on Brussels to attend the International Year of Chemistry 2011 (IYC) official closing ceremony, where thirteen young professionals working in the chemical and science arena presented their vision for the world in 2050.

These forward-thinking young people collaborated to present their report titled “The world in 2050: Our expectations from the life sciences, chemistry, industry and governments to build a better world by 2050”. The “Young Leaders group” gave their view of how chemistry, life sciences, industry and policymakers can in future tackle major challenges such as climate change, resource constraints or drug resistant diseases at a time of population growth to create more sustainable societies.

“There are numerous mega-challenges in the developed, developing and least developed world. The presentation gives a futuristic look at how chemistry can help solve challenges that we all will face, such as feeding growing populations and producing sustainable energy for an estimated nine billion people who will inhabit the planet,” said Sacha Debleds, a young leader who explained the vision project which was supported by a group of organisations, including the Belgium National Committee for Chemistry and IUPAC, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry.

Ada Yonath, 2009 Nobel laureate for chemistry and Jean-Luc Bredas, 1997 Francqui prize winner had prominent roles during the event, responding to the Young Leaders presentations both in the morning and afternoon session. Representatives from UNESCO, the OECD, and the Polish Minister Deputy Minister of Economy Hanna Trojanowska also took part in the event along with chief executives representing global chemicals and pharmaceuticals companies.

His Royal Highness Prince Philippe of Belgium opened the afternoon event and was followed by Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation & Science followed, who discussed how chemistry has a role in helping meet future societal challenges both in Europe and around the globe. IUPAC President Prof. Nicole Moreau provided an overview of the success of the IYC 2011 in her own brief opening address.

Although the IYC is being held to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Marie Curie's Nobel Prize and of the first Solvay Physics-Chemistry Council, the closing ceremony is about looking to the future and the role that chemistry can and must play in building a better, more sustainable world for future generations.

The IYC and its closing ceremony aim to show the essential role of chemistry in meeting world needs. All through 2011 and all over the world, the IYC has been a platform that helped increase interest of young people in chemistry in order to attract first rate minds to careers in chemistry and all the challenges this offers.

Debleds concluded: “We think that we helped generate more enthusiasm for the future of chemistry and how it plays a central role in improving our lives and provide breakthroughs for ambitious projects such as the Millenium Development Goals.”

**For more information, contact** James Pieper, Cefic, on +32 2 676 7398 or via e-mail on [jpi@cefic.be](mailto:jpi@cefic.be).

#### **Notes to editors:**

The IYC 2011 is an initiative of IUPAC, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, and of UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

*ends / all*