

**VISION 2020: THE RIGHT TO SIGHT  
GLOBAL DECLARATION OF SUPPORT**

**The Issue** Globally, three-quarters of the magnitude of blindness is caused by eye conditions which can be prevented or treated.

In the 1990s it was estimated that the extent of visual impairment would double in the period 1990–2020. This realization provided the impetus for the launch of VISION 2020 in 1999.

According to the latest WHO data, there are approximately 314 million people around the world whose vision is impaired, due either to eye diseases or uncorrected refractive errors. Of this number, 45 million people are blind.

Cost-effective interventions are known for most of the major blinding conditions.

**The Problem** The resources available are insufficient to tackle the problem, particularly in low-income countries, where nine out of ten of the world's blind live. There is a lack of trained eye personnel, medicines, ophthalmic equipment, eye care facilities and patient referral systems.

**The Solution** **Global Initiative VISION 2020** – an international partnership among those working for blindness prevention has been formed to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020.

Launched in Geneva on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1999, **the Global Initiative VISION 2020: The Right to Sight** is an unprecedented global partnership which operates as a collaboration between the World Health Organization and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness through its member organizations . VISION 2020 aims to raise awareness, mobilize resources, develop and implement national blindness prevention programmes with governments to prevent an additional estimated 100 million people from being blind by 2020.

**VISION 2020 aims to eliminate the main causes of avoidable blindness by 2020, in order to give all people of the world, the Right to Sight.**

In recognition of the fact that globally three quarters of blindness can be avoided and estimated 100 million people saved from going blind by the year 2020 by taking joint global action now, the undersigned endorse the VISION 2020 Global Initiative.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_