

Civil society statement to the organizers of the “Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing”

November 28, 2018

The undersigned individuals and organizations wish to express our dismay and outrage at He Jiankui’s claims of creating genetically engineered babies. Though these claims are unverified, his actions violate a key provision of the concluding statement issued at the First International Summit on Human Gene Editing in 2015, that such dangerous experiments should not proceed until there was broad societal consensus in their favor.

That statement was intended to reassure civil society that the scientific community could regulate itself and prevent such reckless behavior. If the organizers of this week’s summit in Hong Kong wish to demonstrate that science is not out of control, and is worthy of public trust, now is the time for them and the rest of the international scientific community to act.

We urge that they (1) condemn in clear terms the rogue actions of the researcher who has taken it on himself to make a hugely consequential decision that affects all of us; and (2) call on governments and the United Nations to establish enforceable moratoria prohibiting reproductive experiments with human genetic engineering.

Such policies are necessary in order to ensure that we do not get into a runaway international competition for primacy in reproductive genetic engineering, leading to a new form of eugenics. If the summit and other scientific bodies do not act, it will fall to civil society and policy makers to do so, in order to ensure the avoidance of disastrous consequences for global society.

- David King, Human Genetics Alert
- Marcy Darnovsky, Center for Genetics and Society
- Katie Hasson, Center for Genetics and Society

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2. **Center for Genetics and Society**
3. **Earth Action Canada**
4. **FOODwatch Western Australia**
5. **Friends of the Earth, Australia**
6. **Friends of the Earth, US**
7. **GE Free Northland, Aotearoa/NZ**
8. **GE-free NZ in Food & Environment**
9. **GM Watch**
10. **Human Genetics Alert**
11. **Sciences Citoyennes**
12. **Scientists for Global Responsibility, UK**
13. **Vigilance OGM, Canada**