

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

The Issue There are 45 million blind people and a further 135 million people with serious visual impairment in the world today.

If urgent action is not taken these numbers will double over the next 20 years. This is unacceptable both from a humanitarian and socio-economic point of view.

Cost-effective interventions are available for all major blinding conditions.

The Problem The resources available are insufficient to tackle the problem, particularly in developing countries where nine out of 10 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 **VISION 2020** – an international partnership between those working for blindness prevention has been formed. This is a new initiative to raise awareness, mobilise resources and develop national blindness prevention programmes with governments to prevent an additional 100 million people from being blind by 2020.

Launched in Geneva on 18th February 1999, **VISION 2020: The Right to Sight** is an unprecedented global partnership aiming to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020. The partnership involves the World Health Organization, the Task Force of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (currently consisting of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, Christoffel-Blindenmission, Helen Keller International, Inc., ORBIS International, Inc., and Sight Savers International), international non-governmental organisations, philanthropic institutions and other bodies and individuals working with national governments.

VISION 2020's mission is:

“to eliminate the main causes of blindness in order to give all people of the world, particularly the millions of needlessly blind, the right to sight.”

In recognition of the fact that 100 million people will needlessly go blind by the year 2020 unless joint global action is taken now, please endorse this initiative by signing below.

Signature: 张 Wenkang

Date: September 6, 1999

Name: Zhang Wenkang

Position: Minister of Health