

## Expression of Intention to stand for the position of Vice-Chair of Basic Income Earth Network

2018 General Assembly, BIEN Congress, Tampere

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I write to you to express my intention to stand for the post of Vice-Chair of BIEN in the forthcoming election in Tampere in August 2018. I have taken this decision in response to many well-wishers and close friends from within the basic income community asking me to play a role larger than just working locally and building India Network for Basic Income. I have been in particular discussing basic income movement in India and worldwide with Anja Askeland from Norway, who is now standing for the position of Chair of BIEN; and other friends from the Nordic UBI movement, and several other friends from Europe and US.

My travels to different parts of the world have convinced me that, worldwide, welfare systems are tottering and unable to recalibrate themselves to the current welfare needs of the population, majority of who are slipping into precarious existence. In a world that is increasingly becoming influenced and bullied by market fundamentalism, governments are trying to push their populations more and more towards the markets to rely on to cover the hazards and risks of their lives. I feel that **we as BIEN** need to rise to this situation and play a role that is demanded of us, which is that of actively participating in the conversation, and at times even initiate it in as many countries and international bodies as possible. On my part, in my individual capacity, I have been working with the Basic Income groups in Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Hungary, Malawi and Brazil. I am also making contacts in Bangladesh and Pakistan. With the help of Junior Linares, a research student at the London School of Economics, I have also initiated a discussion among politically active students from Chile and Guatemala. Within India I am working with a wide variety of groups to make them discuss the idea of basic income.

It is true that basic income is being discussed in more countries today than it was even 10 years ago. The idea is gaining traction among political parties, scholars and civil society actors in countries where the idea has become popular. However, much of this discussion is restricted to Europe and North America, with a few exceptions outside these continents. Large number of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America where three-fourths of the world's population lives have not even heard of this idea. BIEN in order to live up to its name as an **Earth Network**, has to make its voice heard in even the remotest country in every corner of the earth. BIEN ought to sit face to face and engage with people who influence the global affairs and welfare of the mankind. Eight years ago, I was completely ignorant of the idea of basic income, and today I am a passionate advocate of basic income, and wish to devote my life to it. This major transformation has happened because of Guy Standing coming to India and introducing the idea about basic income, which excited SEWA, and the rest is history. I was one of those fertile minds that listened to him.

In August 2019, the India Network for Basic Income is going to host the 19 BIEN Congress. I have decided to completely immerse myself and all my time to organise the Congress. In my view, my becoming the Vice Chair would add value and energy to both BIEN and the 2019 Congress. It is my desire to completely immerse myself and partake the excitement of BIEN's historic journey, at this juncture, of moving from Europe to the entire surface of the Earth.