June 8, 2020

As members of the International Advisory Board of Angewandte Chemie, we are taking action together today to resign from our positions. This moment in history demands actions that are highly visible, and this action is intended to call as much attention as possible to the clear need for drastic change at Angewandte Chemie.

We believe the disturbing act of Angewandte Chemie accepting and publishing an essay that promotes racist and sexist views points to a larger problem wherein systems in the journal’s publishing practices have suppressed ethnic and gender diversity. While it is currently unclear what actions the journal plans in response to this event, the initial response saying that the early-view version of the article was not the final version is baffling. The essay was submitted, sent out for peer-review, reviewed, accepted, and published. This does not happen by accident. We, as a group, denounce the essay itself and the process by which it was published.

The advisory board is far from representative of the composition of the larger chemistry community, something highly problematic in itself. As such, if Angewandte Chemie seeks to take meaningful action to change its publishing practices in a way that benefits all of those in the chemistry community, then our resignation today provides the journal with an opportunity to reconstitute the Board in a way that reflects our broader community and society. Doing this will help in providing a path forward for the journal to remake itself and lead in a way that promotes a future for our field that rejects institutional racism and sexism and instead visibly and clearly embraces diversity and inclusivity.

Historically, Angewandte Chemie has been regarded as an elite international journal in the field of chemistry. It is time now for the journal not only to confront, be held accountable for, and correct its actions, but also to adopt a leadership role in championing diversity and anti-racism for a better future for our students and colleagues, especially those underrepresented in our field who, in their current positions, continue to face enormous hurdles of inequality and institutional discrimination.

Frances H. Arnold  
Cathleen M. Crudden  
Joseph M. DeSimone  
John F. Hartwig  
Craig J. Hawker  
Kenichiro Itami

Eric N. Jacobsen  
Robert S. Langer  
David W. C. MacMillan  
W. E. Moerner  
Peter G. Schultz  
Timothy M. Swager

Jack W. Szostak  
Ralph Weissleder  
Younan Xia  
Richard N. Zare