

MarcoPolo700 Foundation Appoints Dr. David Mark Dror as Co-Chair, India & South Asia Committee

Microinsurance Pioneer & founder of India's Micro Insurance Academy to lead the MP700's Silk Road education & cultural exchange programmes across subcontinent

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, March 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The MarcoPolo700 Foundation, a UK charity celebrating the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo's legacy through education, cultural exchange, and digital innovation along the historic Silk Road, today announced the appointment of Dr. David Mark Dror as Co-Chair of its newly established India & South Asia Committee.

Dr. Dror, a Swiss development economist who lived and worked in India for a decade, will lead the Foundation's efforts to bring its programmes — including the annual AI Digital Arts Competition for high school students — to cities across India and the wider South Asian region.

The appointment reflects MarcoPolo700's commitment to expanding its Silk Road city network into one of the world's most culturally rich and historically significant regions. India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are all listed among the Foundation's target countries for its education programmes, and Dr. Dror's extensive networks across the subcontinent — built over more than 25 years of fieldwork — position him to accelerate this expansion.

David Piesse, Co-CEO of MarcoPolo700 Foundation, said: "David Dror embodies the spirit of Marco Polo — a European who journeyed East not merely to observe but to build, to learn, and to create knowledge that flowed in both directions. His appointment gives us a partner with deep institutional relationships across India and a track record of turning ideas into lasting organisations. We are delighted to welcome him."

Dr. David Mark Dror said: "Marco Polo's journey reminds us that the most transformative knowledge emerges when cultures meet and learn from each other. I spent ten years in India discovering exactly that — that solutions designed with communities, not imposed on them, are the ones that endure. I look forward to helping MarcoPolo700 bring that message of curiosity and exchange to young people across India and South Asia."

About Dr. David Mark Dror

Dr. Dror is widely recognised as the creator of the field of microinsurance. In 1999, he coined the

term and published the foundational paper that reframed 2.4 billion uninsured informal workers as an insurable population. After a 21-year career at the International Labour Organization in Geneva, and while serving as Honorary Professor at Erasmus University Rotterdam, he founded the Micro Insurance Academy (MIA) in New Delhi in 2007 at the age of 63. He lived full-time in India from 2007 to 2017, commuting to Rotterdam to continue teaching, and grew MIA to 260 staff across multiple Indian states. MIA trained over 7,000 practitioners in 19 countries, conducted award-winning randomised controlled trials, and became the first microinsurance organisation globally to achieve ISO 9001 certification.

Dr. Dror is the author of about 100 peer-reviewed articles and 7 books, and served as Guest Editor of The Geneva Papers on Risk and Insurance for four special issues on microinsurance (2012, 2014, 2016, 2019). His recent work, the Trinity Law of Social Sustainability, provides a mathematical framework for predicting the success of collective action institutions. He holds a PhD (Summa cum Laude) in Economics and Management from the Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1, and is currently Principal Adviser (pro bono) at the Health Investment & Financing Corporation, New York.

Awards include: Insurance Personality of the Year (2009), Lifetime Achievement Award in Asian Insurance (2015), Shin Research Excellence Award (2016), and ScholarGPS Top 0.05% globally in Health Insurance (2024).

About MarcoPolo700 Foundation

The MarcoPolo700 Foundation is a UK-registered charity (Company No. 15246356) established in 2023 on the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo's passing. Its mission is to amplify Marco Polo's legacy by inspiring exploration, education, and cultural exchange. Programmes include a travelling digital and physical art exhibition visiting 10 Silk Road cities, annual AI Digital Arts Competitions for secondary school students, and cross-border research collaborations with universities including Università Ca' Foscari (Venice), Durham University, and others. Strategic partners include UNESCO and the Hong Kong International Family Office Association. For more information: www.marcopolo700.org

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