On Friday 21 June 2024, Professor Sebastián Ureta, the new Prince Claus Chairholder for 2023-2025, delivered his inaugural lecture at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS).

The event, titled "Beyond Co-creation: Sketching a Critical Citizen Science for a World on Fire," took place from 16:00 to 17:00 in the Aula and was also streamed live online. Professor Ureta's lecture focused on the mobilization of citizen technoscience to address environmental degradation in the Global South. He critically examined the current state of citizen science (CS), highlighting its potential and pitfalls. While CS is praised for engaging the public in scientific endeavors and democratizing knowledge, Ureta argued that it often fails to achieve genuine collaboration. Instead, he noted, citizens are frequently treated as cheap labor with little recognition of their epistemic contributions.

Drawing from a CS project on soil pollution in Chile, Ureta emphasized the need for a critical approach to citizen science that prioritizes social and epistemic justice. He advocated for projects that acknowledge existing inequalities and strive for socioenvironmental justice rather than merely producing data or promoting the status quo.

The lecture was well-received, marking a significant start to Professor Ureta's appointment to the Prince Claus Chair in Equity and Development. Attendees praised the event for its insightful and thought-provoking content, setting a promising tone for future initiatives.