Professor M S Swaminathan has been acclaimed by TIME magazine as one of the twenty most influential Asians of the 20th Century and one of the only three from India, the other two being Mahatma Ghandi and Rabindranath Tagore. A plant geneticist by training, Professor Swaminathan’s contributions to the agricultural renaissance of India and his advocacy of sustainable agriculture leading to an ever-green revolution, makes him an acknowledged world leader in the field of sustainable food security. He was chairman of the UN Science Advisory Committee set up in 1980 to take follow-up action on the Vienna Plan of Action, and has also served as Independent Chairman of the FAO Council and President of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. He was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1971, the Albert Einstein World Science Award in 1986, and the first World Food Prize in 1987, and has received 50 honorary doctorate degrees from universities around the world.

Professor Swaminathan currently holds the UNESCO Chair in Ecotechnology at the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation in Chennai (Madras), India. He is the Chairman of the National Commission on Farmers, Government of India, and is the current President of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs.