

UN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON PANDEMIC PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Key Asks and Suggested Wording for the Political Declaration

Since 2020, the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) has been calling for a UN Summit on health emergency preparedness and response to strengthen political commitment and effective collective, multisectoral action. The GPMB welcomes the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to hold a High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPPR) on 20 September 2023.

In February 2023, the GPMB published [A Manifesto for Preparedness](#), in which the Board sets out three tests for global preparedness reforms in 2023, including for this High-Level Meeting and the Political Declaration it will adopt.

The GPMB calls on heads of state and government participating in this High-Level Meeting to make the bold political commitments that are urgently needed to close gaps in equity, coherence, and leadership & accountability in PPPR – commitments the Board has repeatedly called for in its reports.

1. THE OUTCOME: EQUITY

COVID-19 has accentuated divisions between the Global South and Global North. The High-Level Meeting can provide a forum in which to build a common approach to delivering equity in access and outcomes in PPPR. Equity is in everyone's interest; no one is safe until all are safe.

Based on its assessment of preparedness over the last four years, the GPMB has reached the conclusion that equity can only be achieved if and when all leaders have the knowledge, capacities, commitment and tools to protect their people. All people, especially the most vulnerable, must have access to these resources, based on need, not ability to pay. Sharing of information, benefits sharing and working collectively at all levels are key.

To ensure equity in PPPR, the High-Level Meeting should:

- **Recognize pandemic preparedness as a global public good¹**, agreeing on a path to achieve sustainable equitable access to health emergency medical countermeasures² through the pandemic convention, agreement, or other international instrument (also known as the 'Pandemic Accord') and other reforms by building research, manufacturing, regulatory and deployment capacity, through knowledge and technology transfers and collaborative capacity building as well as through investment in health systems strengthening and primary health care. The High-Level Meeting must agree on a way to finance this access at the required level to support equitable outcomes.
- **Agree on the need for a multilateral, fair, equitable and timely system for the open sharing of pathogens with pandemic potential**, including genomic sequences and information, and the sharing of benefits arising from their use, including data, knowledge, innovations and tools.
- **Commit to removing trade barriers, strengthening supply chains, and facilitating the free movement of essential medical and public health goods and countermeasures** during pandemics and health emergencies between all countries. Countries must commit to ensuring that intellectual property rights do not impede access to life-saving medical countermeasures and technologies for PPPR, including through appropriate waivers.

2. THE PRINCIPLE: COHERENCE

Several parallel global reforms of PPPR are underway in 2023. To ensure that these reforms strengthen PPPR, and do not lead to further fragmentation within the health emergency ecosystem and the global health system overall, these reforms must be multisectoral, interlinked, well coordinated, agile, and deliver solutions and resources based on need.

Coherence requires that reforms address the interlinked crises that the world faces and build broader societal resilience. This means addressing the full cycle of PPPR – from prevention and preparedness through to response and recovery – based on a One Health approach and in an integrated way, including action on the fundamental causes of pandemics.

The reforms must recognize the central role of the World Health Organization (WHO) in leading and coordinating PPPR. The recommendations of the High-Level Meeting must be clearly positioned in the context of the ongoing negotiations on the Pandemic Accord and amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) at WHO.

1 Global public goods benefit all of humanity. Pandemic preparedness in one country or community benefits all countries because it prevents the further spread of disease and protects communities everywhere.

2 Countermeasures include vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, personal protective equipment, and other essential health technologies.

To ensure coherence in PPPR, the High-Level Meeting should:

- **Recognize the epidemiological, social, technological, economic, environmental, commercial and political determinants³ of pandemics and health emergencies** and commit to operationalize a multisectoral, whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach to PPPR, engaging organizations and sectors, including the environment, animal health, health systems, R&D, financing, social protection, education, supply chains and transportation, trade, private sector and civil society.
- **Reinforce the role of the World Health Organization (WHO) within the whole-of-UN approach to PPPR**, recognizing the importance of a successful conclusion to the negotiations on the Pandemic Accord, and the role of this agreement as the primary and overarching vehicle for delivering significant improvements in PPPR that will have a tangible impact, and in a manner that is genuinely in the interests of and for the benefit of all people.
- **Recognize the need for additional multisectoral action and oversight across the UN and multilateral system**, including regional political and economic bodies, as well as underline the need for effective coordination across the UN system and relevant international agencies to deliver on PPPR, in order to avoid duplication and ensure efficient use of resources.

3. THE RESPONSIBILITY: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY

The GPMB has highlighted political and technical leadership as a critical requirement for health emergency preparedness and response. The COVID-19 response has demonstrated how PPPR fails without determined political leadership at the highest level, underpinned by accountability.

Pandemics pose a catastrophic threat to society, economies and security. The High-Level Meeting must encourage the highest levels of national and international leadership across government, civil society and the private sector to address this threat. Pandemics begin and end in communities, and therefore leaders must empower communities to protect themselves.

The High-Level Meeting must lead to a commitment to strengthen monitoring across all sectors as the foundation of evidence-based decision-making and accountability, including through robust self-assessment, peer review and independent monitoring. The purpose of this monitoring should be to support governments and other stakeholders across all sectors in identifying risks, determinants and threats that can lead to pandemics and health emergencies; identifying and addressing gaps in PPPR; finding solutions to ensure equity, effectiveness and efficiency of PPPR; and tracking implementation of obligations and commitments. Monitoring can play a key role in promoting compliance, ensuring that all actors are held to account for their commitments, and that their actions lead to greater preparedness and a safer world.

³ The epidemiological determinants include demographics and burden of disease. The social determinants include social and community context, global mobility, and social inequity. The technological determinants include social media usage and misinformation, digital connectivity, and biomedical innovations. The economic determinants include economic development, economic inequality and availability and financing for social programs. The environmental determinants include climate change and natural disasters, agricultural and farming practices, and the built environment. The commercial determinants include the actions of businesses that impact health. The political determinants include government effectiveness, public trust in government, conflict, instability and violence.

To strengthen leadership and accountability, the High-Level Meeting should:

- **Encourage the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (INB) to adopt binding commitments** to improve equity, coherence, monitoring and accountability.
- **Encourage WHO Member States to update and strengthen the International Health Regulations (2005)**, including by reinforcing monitoring and accountability for their implementation through an enhanced role for the WHO.
- **Commit to fully financing national preparedness plans and support international financing for PPPR**, acknowledging international financing needs (including for prevention and preparedness and to address the socioeconomic impact of health emergencies in lower- and middle-income countries (LMICs), funding for global public/common goods, and funding for early response) and identifying approaches to fully finance these needs, highlighting the importance of non-overseas development assistance sources to avoid competition with other important health needs, and promoting long-term investments in PPPR within health systems.
- **Acknowledge the importance of monitoring of PPPR across all sectors as the foundation of evidence-based decision-making and accountability**, and call for reforms to strengthen the monitoring and accountability architecture of PPPR, including independent monitoring, anchored in existing reporting mechanisms at all levels, to track commitments of all actors.
- **Decide on a process for monitoring, reporting and following up on implementation of the Political Declaration**, including a follow-up High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response to take place in 2025, following the adoption of the Pandemic Accord.

4. THE PROCESS FOR THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

To deliver the priorities of equity, coherence, and leadership & accountability, preparations for the High-Level Meeting on PPPR must ensure that:

- Every country is represented at the highest level (head of state/head of government) at the High-Level Meeting.
- The High-Level Meeting and related panels, including the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, involve all relevant sectors, including: One Health⁴ (health, animal health, and environment), R&D, financing, social protection, education, supply chains and transportation, trade, and include representatives from civil society and the private sector to ensure meaningful engagement in this process.
- The three health-related High-Level Meetings on PPPR, Universal Health Coverage and Tuberculosis are well coordinated to reduce redundancies, but sufficiently distinct to ensure that pandemics are addressed as the all-encompassing catastrophic threats that they represent to humanity, across all sectors.

4 One Health is "an integrative and systemic approach to health, grounded on the understanding that human health is closely linked to the healthiness of food, animals and the environment, and the healthy balance of their impact on the ecosystems they share, everywhere in the world." One Health definition developed by the One Health High-Level Expert Panel, see [One Health High-Level Expert Panel \(OHHLEP\) \(who.int\)](#).

SUGGESTIONS OF TEXT FOR THE POLITICAL DECLARATION RELATED TO THESE PRIORITIES, FOR MEMBER STATES' CONSIDERATION

Recognizing pandemic prevention, preparedness and response as a global public good and the urgent need to achieve sustainable equitable access to health emergency countermeasures;

Recognizing the need to address the epidemiological, social, technological, economic, environmental, commercial and political determinants of pandemics and health emergencies;

Reaffirming the World Health Organization's role as the directing and coordinating authority on international health work and its key leadership role within the United Nations response to pandemics and health emergencies, and recognizing the importance of a successful conclusion of negotiations on a pandemic convention, agreement or other international instrument, as the primary and overarching vehicle for delivering significant improvements in pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, with a real impact and in a manner that is genuinely in the interests of and for the benefit of all people;

Recognizing the importance of objective, evidence-based and multisectoral monitoring of PPPR, including independent monitoring, as well as accountability for required action and results;

Calls for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (INB) to adopt binding commitments to equity, coherence, monitoring and accountability;

Calls on WHO Member States to update and strengthen the International Health Regulations (2005), including by reinforcing monitoring and accountability for its implementation through an enhanced role for WHO;

Calls for multisectoral action and oversight across the UN and multilateral system, and effective coordination across the United Nations system and with relevant international agencies to deliver on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response;

Commits to scaling up our efforts and further implement the following actions:

- Operationalize a multisectoral, whole-of-government, whole-of-society One Health approach to PPPR, across health, animal health, environment, R&D, financing, social protection, education, supply chains and transportation, and trade sectors, in consultation with the private sector and civil society;
- Establish a multilateral, fair, equitable and timely system for the open sharing of pathogens with pandemic potential, including genomic sequences and information, and the sharing of benefits arising from their use, including data, knowledge, innovations and tools, through the adoption of the WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response;
- Achieve sustainable and equitable access to medical countermeasures by building research, manufacturing, regulatory and delivery capacity, through knowledge and technology transfers and collaborative capacity building as well as investments in health systems strengthening and primary health care;
- Strengthen supply chains, address trade barriers and facilitate the free movement of essential medical goods and countermeasures to support the response to pandemics and health emergencies;

- Fully finance national preparedness plans and support international financing needs, including support for preparedness and the socioeconomic impact of health emergencies in LMICs, funding for global common goods, funding for early response, and long-term investments in pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and identify approaches to fully finance these needs, including through the international and regional financing institutions, and through funding sources other than overseas development assistance;
- Strengthen monitoring and accountability for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, including independent monitoring, through the adoption of the WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and the amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005), and other reforms;

Requests the Secretary-General to provide, in consultation with the World Health Organization and other relevant agencies, a progress report during the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, and a report including recommendations on the implementation of the present declaration towards pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, which will serve to inform the High-Level Meeting to be convened in 2025 during the eightieth session of the General Assembly;

Decides to convene a High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response in 2025 in New York, aimed to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the present declaration to identify gaps and solutions to accelerate progress towards improving pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, the scope and modalities of which shall be decided no later than the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly, taking into consideration the outcomes of other pandemic prevention, preparedness and response reform processes.

About the GPMB

The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) is an independent monitoring and accountability body to ensure preparedness for global health crises. Co-convened by the World Health Organization and World Bank, the GPMB comprises globally recognized leaders and experts from a wide range of sectors, including medicine, global health, veterinary epidemiology, environment, human rights, economics, law, gender, and development. It is tasked with providing an independent and comprehensive appraisal for policy makers and the world about progress towards increased preparedness and response capacity for disease outbreaks and other emergencies with health consequences. In short, the work of the GPMB is to chart a roadmap for a safer world.