



INSTITUT DE HAUTES
ÉTUDES INTERNATIONALES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
GRADUATE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AND
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE AND UN SUMMIT ON GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY: PROCESS AND RISK ANALYSIS

Gian Luca Burci¹

Alfredo Crosato Neumann²

11 December 2020

Introduction

1. In its report “A World in Disorder”, the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) called upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the heads of international financial institutions to “convene a UN Summit on Global Health Security, with the aim of agreeing on an international framework for health emergency preparedness and response, incorporating the IHR, and including mechanisms for sustainable financing, research and development, social protection, equitable access to countermeasures for all, and mutual accountability”.³
2. The GPMB Secretariat presented a concept note dated 3 November 2020 offering a vision of the possible scope, content and form of the abovementioned international framework. To

¹ Adjunct Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.

² Doctoral Candidate in International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.

³ Global Preparedness Monitoring Board, *A World in Disorder* (World Health Organization, 2020), p. 9.

complement that concept note and to support the implementation of the Board's recommendations, we have been asked by the GPMB Secretariat to provide a report addressing the factors that can support or impede the adoption of such an international framework, as well as strategies to address those factors.

3. It must be noted at the outset that there are independent variables that cannot be easily factored into the analysis but that are likely to have a decisive influence on the process and its outcome. The most immediate variables are the global geopolitical situation, the current wave of nationalism, internal politics in the United States of America and other key players, and the current focus of many countries on the immediate priority of controlling the COVID-19 pandemic, all of which can reduce the political bandwidth for a major international political initiative. These independent variables are excluded from this report as they would require a sophisticated political analysis going beyond the limited remit and timeline of our project.

Methodology

4. Rather than focusing on risks, the present report seeks to visualize, from a process perspective, the main building blocks towards a UN summit and the eventual adoption of an international framework on health emergency preparedness and response, and to raise proposals or point to alternative directions with related risks and opportunities.
5. Since the GPMB recommended convening “a UN Summit on Global Health Security, with the aim of agreeing on an international framework”, any analysis of the process and related risks and opportunities has to be construed within the context of the governance, policies and practices of the UN. To this end, we have relied on the decisions taken by the UN General Assembly for the launch, convening and setting up of preparatory processes for recent UN conferences on complex socio-economic and multi-sectoral questions, such as the following:
 - The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/68/211);
 - The Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (A/RES/71/1 and A/RES/71/280);

- The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/RES/74/232); and
 - Rio+20 (A/RES/64/236) and;
 - the Sustainable Development Goals (A/RES/69/244).⁴
6. An important qualification to the above references is that the conferences and their outcome were either part of a cycle or emerged from previous policy-setting resolutions. Consequently, the modalities and processes for convening and preparing the conferences were influenced by previous decisions and patterns of practice built on their implementation. Such circumstances do not exist in the present case: the process to convene the UN summit recommended by the GPMB would essentially start from zero.
7. Starting afresh can raise both risk and opportunities: the main risk is the absence of a previous policy decision that, while capable of generating inertia, may also serve to provide a framework and keep the momentum across cycles of policy discussions, political decisions and reviews thereof. However, an equally important opportunity is precisely the absence of ingrained precedents that can open a space for creative solutions and tailoring the process to the specific needs and features of a framework on global health security.⁵
8. Factors that can influence the success or failure of the GPMB's initiative can be grouped and conceptualized either in a chronological or thematic manner. The former would map and follow possible steps along the process that would lead to an eventual UN summit and the adoption of the desired international framework. The latter would group factors by their nature or similarity. Both approaches are developed in some detail below.
9. The present report is structured in two main sections. Section I sets out, based on past experience in similar matters, a chronological sequence of basic steps that could lead to a UN

⁴ The relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly can be found as an annex to this report.

⁵ It should be noted that none of the resolutions adopted to date by the UN General Assembly in relation to COVID-19 mentions the possibility of a future summit or conference. See UNGA Resolution 75/4 of 9 November 2020; UNGA Resolution 74/307 of 11 September 2020; UNGA Resolution 74/306 of 11 September 2020; UNGA Resolution 74/274 of 20 April 2020; and UNGA Resolution 74/270 of 2 April 2020.

summit. Section II provides an analysis of process and policy considerations, grouped thematically, with related risks and opportunities. This analysis takes into account the various elements for an international framework set out in the GPMB's concept note of 3 November 2020.

I. Basic Steps towards a UN Summit

10. There are certain basic steps that ought to be followed to arrive to a UN summit, i.e. one convened by a principal organ of the UN such as the General Assembly or ECOSOC. We have used these buildings blocks in the present report as a working hypothesis to identify risks and opportunities for the adoption of an international framework for health emergency preparedness and response.

11. The steps towards a UN summit can be broadly spelled out as follows:

Step 1: A gap analysis and the assessment of the policy needs that the international framework would address. A reasonably clear vision of what to achieve in the framework is crucial.

Step 2: Reaching out to the main constituencies (States and other stakeholders); identification of champions who will lead the process.

Step 3: Organization of and participation in events (including at the regional level) building momentum towards a UN General Assembly resolution launching the negotiation process by using planned high-level events for 2021.⁶

Step 4: Adoption by the UN General Assembly of a resolution convening the summit and setting in motion a preparatory process. Such a resolution could be adopted by September 2021, but it is theoretically also possible to have this done earlier since the UN General Assembly is in session the whole year. It should be noted that there is no dedicated item on COVID-19 in the agenda of the General Assembly,

⁶ Some upcoming events where momentum could be built towards the adoption of a UNGA resolution are already mentioned in the GPMB's concept note of 3 November 2020: The World Health Assembly in May 2021, the Global Health Summit hosted by the European Commission and the Italian presidency of the G20, and the G7 Summit hosted by the United Kingdom.

and the resolutions adopted since March were placed under catch-all items.⁷ Supporting member states can either propose a draft resolution under an existing agenda item, or propose a dedicated item in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly and corresponding timelines.

Step 5: Launch of the preparatory process, which can be long and elaborated depending on the complexity of the issues at stake and the features and steps agreed upon. Main points from previous UN General Assembly resolutions convening an international conference and launching a preparatory process often include the mandate of the relevant preparatory committee, the number of meetings and their time and venue, the establishment of a bureau, the role of the President of the UN General Assembly (e.g. in appointing the facilitators of the preparatory process), as well as participation and involvement by other international organizations and non-state actors.

Step 6: Related consultative processes feeding into the preparatory process, including UN system coordination, multi-stakeholder consultations, and presentations of views and positions.

Step 7: Summit and adoption of the international framework.⁸

12. This roadmap could evidently be more elaborate, in particular as regards step 5 – the preparatory work within the UN system –, which could end up being a lengthy process. For purposes of the present report, however, the main building blocks identified above should suffice at this stage for the GPMB to have a clear enough vision of the way forward.

II. General Process and Policy Considerations

13. This section provides an analysis of process and policy considerations, grouped thematically, taking into account the elements set out in the concept note of 3 November 2020. Sections A

⁷ For example, resolution A/RES/74/306 was adopted under agenda items entitled « Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields » and « Implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations »

⁸ All the major conferences identified for the purpose of the present report also establish a follow-up and review process managed by the General Assembly and the competent programmes of the UN. This aspect is not included in the present report as it goes beyond the adoption of the framework under consideration.

to C deal with conceptual issues, initiative, leadership and support as well as stakeholder involvement and coordination. These are cross-cutting matters that may be relevant for all the steps towards the UN summit indicated above. Sections D and E deal more particularly with the preparatory process within the UN system once launched by the UN General Assembly, and the UN summit itself.

A. Conceptual Issues

14. There is a number of conceptual issues that should be reflected upon and ideally determined at a very early stage as they will most likely influence the process as well as its outcome. In other words, the way an initiative like this is launched and framed can generate a path dependency that can be difficult to reverse or substantially change later.
15. A first issue concerns the early vision of the international framework. To arrive at the desired outcome, it is crucial to agree and state a vision of the ultimate purpose of the framework and what it should cover. As indicated in Section I above, this may require undertaking an assessment of the policy needs that the framework would address as well as the gaps in existing policy and legal instruments in meeting those needs. In its concept note of 3 November 2020, the GPMB has already identified a number of elements that should be included in the future framework, namely: a) principles and priorities, goals and targets; b) revised and strengthened International Health Regulations (IHR); c) research, development and access to countermeasures; d) sustainable financing; e) coordination; and f) accountability and governance. Further elaboration of those elements before reaching out to relevant stakeholders might prove useful.
16. A second issue is the form that the international framework should be given, i.e. whether the outcome should be a legally binding instrument or a political declaration. Determining this issue is important because the process of negotiation may vary significantly depending on the choice made. The concept note of 3 November 2020 suggests that a non-binding international instrument would be the most appropriate outcome (similar to the 2015 Sendai

Framework). The precedents that we have relied on in the present report (see para. 5 above) take this into account.

17. The concept note further suggests that the IHR should be included within the proposed framework (how exactly is not clear, but we understand that the idea of the GPMB is that at least some reference to the IHR should be made within the framework). If this is so, it should be borne in mind that there may be some overlap with the current process of review/revision of the IHR. Moreover, the aforementioned process falls under the mandate and competence of WHO rather than the UN. Attention should therefore be paid to what an international framework developed by the UN through a different process could add to a future WHO process (that will be launched at the earliest by the 74th WHA in 2021) without creating confusion or risk being used by some states to weaken the revision of the IHR.
18. A third issue is the importance of how to frame the proposal and what its driving message should be: health security, social protection, economic resilience? Successful framing tends to influence the political tone and the relative importance of issues at stake as well as interactions of the framework with other policy, governance and legal regimes. It also mobilizes diverse groups of states and other stakeholders, that use the framing as a tool to “market” the proposal.

B. Initiative, Leadership, and Support

19. Questions of initiative, leadership and support throughout the process must be duly taken into account to achieve the desired outcome. This includes at least a preliminary political mapping of states that could be counted on to own, launch and support the proposal. Such a political mapping could be done by the GPMB in consultation with WHO and the UN as the two international organizations more closely involved. The UN Secretariat could probably better assess the position of member states on issues other than global health, while the WHO Secretariat would be better positioned to map the latter. In other words, the ideal starting point from a political perspective would be to secure support from a critical mass of states that have possibly diverse but not mutually exclusive stakes on some of the envisaged elements of a future framework and are prepared to support others towards a “package deal”.

20. Following up on the previous point, it would be preferable to consult with states from as many regional groups as possible. At first blush, the European Union (EU) and most of its member states could be counted on also in view of the recent EU proposal of a “pandemic convention” covering some of the elements of the international framework at the UN General Assembly special session on COVID-19. Furthermore, based on an (albeit anecdotal) assessment of their previous engagement in WHO processes, states such as Thailand, South Africa, Canada, Ecuador, New Zealand and Japan could also be enlisted as early active supporters.
21. Securing the early commitment by the UN Secretary-General and his Executive Office (in particular the Deputy Secretary-General with her mandate on the SDGs) would be very important to give visibility and political traction to the initiative. The Secretary-General could choose to announce the initiative and call for member states’ support. In that case, a proper time and venue to announce the initiative for the first time would need to be determined.⁹ Alternatively, the Secretary-General may prefer, from a strategic perspective, that the initiative come from member states, while also facilitating the political mapping and mobilization mentioned above.
22. The UN as the convener of a future conference for the adoption of the international framework¹⁰ would have the advantage of providing a well-known institutional and political framework, as well as of counting on the UN Secretary-General as catalyzer and coordinator. The Secretary-General has proven well capable of knocking on the door of the main constituencies (states and other stakeholders) for such initiatives and building up the critical mass that is needed. His personal involvement would be important also to secure the participation at the highest level of other international organizations, including notably the international financial institutions.

⁹ Some possibilities have been mentioned in note 5 above.

¹⁰ This has been foreshadowed in UNGA Resolution 74/307 (“*Recognizing* the essential role of the United Nations as the body that can effectively bring together a global response to control and contain the spread of COVID-19 and address the critical interlinkages between health, trade, finance and economic and social development...”).

23. The question may be raised whether there are alternatives to the UN as the convener of the conference, and an obvious one that comes to mind is WHO. However, as the trend developed since the 2001 special session on HIV-AIDS shows, policy-setting on complex and multi-sectoral health issues has moved consistently from the WHA to the General Assembly. WHO is considered as a more technical organization, without the political mandate of the UN. Moreover, the main national constituencies of WHO consist of ministries of health who may not have the expertise, mandate or political weight to effectively lead a process of this nature. Trying to steer responsibility for the summit and the framework towards WHO may risk weakening the overall process and outcome.
24. An initiative like the one the GPMB proposes would certainly require an important component of inter-agency cooperation and coordination, but it is also important that the UN takes the lead to guarantee an orderly, centralized process, as well as the broadest possible participation by stakeholders given the multi-sectoral nature of the desired international framework.
25. The importance of ‘champions’ and advocates in this context cannot be overstated. Champions serve to generate and maintain support and mobilization, and they can consist, besides member states, of individuals, international organizations, non-state actors and other groups. Besides maintaining political momentum, champions play an important role in bringing the voice of stakeholders and strengthening the legitimacy of the initiative. They also play a crucial role in bringing evidence that may influence the final content of the international framework. The role of “norm entrepreneurs” in generating momentum towards the creation of new international policy and legal norms and in reaching a “tipping point” beyond which such momentum takes a life of its own, has been well explained and analyzed by leading international relations scholars.¹¹

¹¹ See M. Finnemore and K. Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change”, *International Organization*, vol. 52 (1998), pp. 887-917; J. Tallberg *et al.*, “Norm Adoption by International Organizations, 1980-2015”, Paper for the 11th Annual Conference on the Political Economy of International Organizations, Madison, February 8-10, 2018; A. Wiener, *Contestation and Constitution of Norms in Global International Relations* (CUP, 2018).

26. A familiar example in this connection, that could offer useful lessons on how to organize the process under consideration, is that leading to the negotiation and adoption of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). In that case, WHO produced cogent evidence on the health impact of tobacco use and the World Bank produced equally important evidence on the economics of tobacco control. Director-General Brundtland offered determined leadership, supported by a dedicated alliance of NGOs and most importantly by a critical mass of member states that pushed that issue through WHO's governance, built a growing alliance and provided reliable and sustainable funding.
27. Equally important are the so-called 'Friends' of the process/chairperson as informal groups to support the preparatory process (see below) launched by the UN General Assembly, divide labour, trouble-shoot and coordinate with major groups.
28. The GPMB will need to determine what its role will be throughout the process, when and how to advocate, and how to keep distance, when necessary, from the intergovernmental process. It is our understanding that the GPMB intends to play an advocacy role throughout the process, but that it does not seek to be the main driving force, at least once the matter is taken up by the UN Secretary-General and the member states championing the process.
29. It would also be important that Director-General Tedros define, at least in general terms but at an early stage, WHO's role in the process and its interactions with other key international organizations such as the UN and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Given the lack of health expertise in the UN Secretariat, WHO could and should play a central role in providing evidence, analysis and substantive inputs across the whole process. This role could be recognized and formalized in the UN General Assembly resolution launching the process and convening the summit. Such recognition would also be important for resource mobilization purposes.

C. Stakeholder involvement and coordination

30. As noted above, it is important to ensure the early commitment and joint mobilization of the main organizations most likely to be involved in the process: besides the UN and the WHO, organizations that may be essential to the success of the initiative and its future implementation are the key financial institutions and regional organizations: the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as the EU and the African Union (AU). Given the evident developmental component of any international framework and the crucial importance of food security at times of health emergencies, UNDP, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) should also be involved in the process. In view of the reference to research, development and equitable allocation of pharmaceutical countermeasures as part of the international framework, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) may also play an important role.
31. An early mapping of funding sources will have to be undertaken, given the predictable scarcity of assessed contributions at the UN and other organizations. Funding must be secured early on to jump-start activities, including the early stages leading up to a UN General Assembly resolution. It may not be appropriate to deliberately seek funds from non-state actors given the political sensitivity of many of the issues involved for both states and notably the pharmaceutical industry.
32. As noted above, an inter-agency consultation and coordination mechanism will have to be established in parallel with the preparatory process. This matter has been addressed in a more or less similar manner in previous cases:
- Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (A/RES/68/211): provides for the “full participation” of specialized agencies (paras. 16, 18); requests “the organizations of the United Nations system, and invites the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and other relevant international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, to provide necessary support and to actively contribute to the preparatory process and to the Third World Conference itself through inter-agency cooperation and effective participation and coherence within the United Nations

system, as well as the efficient use of resources, so that the objectives of the Conference can be addressed...”.

- The Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (A/RES/71/1): UN Secretariat and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) “would jointly service the negotiations, the former providing capacity and support and the latter extending the technical and policy expertise required” (Annex 2, para. 12); “the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other entities with significant mandates and expertise related to migration would contribute to the process” (para. 13) (see also A/RES/71/280, paras. 11, 12).
- Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/RES/74/232): requests “the organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to undertake sectoral appraisals ... and to make proposals for new measures ... and in this regard affirms that appropriate inter-agency meetings should be convened in order to ensure the full mobilization and coordination of the entire United Nations system ...” (para. 53).
- Rio+20 (A/RES/64/236): requests “the Secretary-General to provide all appropriate support to the work of the preparatory process and the Conference, ensuring inter-agency participation and coherence as well as the efficient use of resources” (para. 27) (see also A/RES/69/244, para. 7).

33. Given consolidated trends within the UN in favour of inclusiveness of stakeholders affected by international policies, the process should have a multi-stakeholder dimension. The involvement of the private sector, philanthropic foundations, non-governmental organizations and public-private partnerships should be organized using previously tested UN procedural arrangements so as to avoid concerns about corporate capture of the process. Previous experience shows that these processes allow a wide range of participants:

- Sendai Framework (A/RES/68/211): UN Member States (para. 16); members of specialized agencies (para. 16); international and bilateral donors, the private sector,

financial institutions, foundations and other donors (para. 17); “all relevant stakeholders”, including major groups, parliaments, civil society, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, non-governmental organizations, national platforms for disaster risk reduction, focal points for the Hyogo Framework for Action; local government representatives, scientific institutions and the private sector, as well as organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations (para. 18).

- Global Compact for Migration (A/RES/71/280): UN Member States (para. 3); members of specialized agencies (para. 3); “all relevant stakeholders”, including civil society, the private sector, academic institutions, parliaments, diaspora communities and migrant organizations; other non-governmental organizations (para. 6); national human rights institutions (para. 9)
- Sustainable Development Goals (A/RES/69/244): UN Member States (para. 6); UN funds and programmes, specialized agencies, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, regional development banks, regional commissions of the UN, and other relevant stakeholders, including parliamentarians, academia, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, major groups and the private sector (para. 7); the Inter-Parliamentary Union (para. 9).
- Recent processes such as launch of the SDG process (A/RES/66/288) stress the importance of working with “major groups” representing main categories of stakeholders and ensuring a diversity of perspectives. These include “women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community, and farmers, as well as other stakeholders, including local communities, volunteer groups and foundations, migrants and families, as well as older persons and persons with disabilities...”
- While WHO does not have much experience with these groups, the UN and UNDP have much more familiarity and may identify entry points and mechanisms to involve them. At the same time, it is important that WHO advocate for the participation of health-related stakeholders and groups, including professional associations which are at the frontline of the COVID-19 response.

D. Preparatory Process

34. The process leading to a UN summit would be launched by a resolution of the UN General Assembly, bringing the process within the purview of the UN procedural framework. As noted in Section I, the lead up to that resolution may start with a group of states or the UN Secretary-General proposing an item for the agenda of the General Assembly, or alternatively proposing a draft resolution under an existing agenda item. While the latter may be expedient if there is a strong momentum to jump-start the preparatory process during the 75th session of the Assembly, a dedicated agenda item may increase the political visibility of the initiative and enable the UN Secretariat, in cooperation with WHO, to submit a report and other documentation that would ideally facilitate decision-making.
35. The content of the resolution by the UN General Assembly will be critical to shape the negotiating process. Following precedents, the resolution would set up a preparatory process including the establishment of a negotiating body open to all States, modalities and conditions for participation, rules of procedure, deadlines, dates of working sessions and other events, funding, secretariat support, etc. The GPMB could play a useful role in this connection, by raising awareness as appropriate about the desirable features of the inter-governmental process and advocating with key member states.
36. An important issue that will have to be decided by the UN General Assembly resolution is the chairmanship of the preparatory process. Recent precedents point to a pattern of appointing co-chairs or co-facilitators from developed and developing countries in order to divide work and most importantly to project a balanced image of the leadership of the process. WHO is familiar with this approach, e.g. in the final phase of the negotiation of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework. The risk in this case is of a difficult relationship between the co-chairs and resulting tensions or lack of communication. Based on relevant precedents reflected in the corresponding General Assembly resolutions, the appointment of co-chairs falls within the authority of the President of the Assembly.

37. The other important component of the leadership of the process consists of the establishment of a regionally representative bureau including vice-chairs and rapporteur. The size and regional breakdown would be decided by the UN General Assembly. While regional representation is essential in any UN process, the bureau should at the same time be of a reasonable size to avoid overburdening the process and render consultations labour-intensive. As an example, the preparatory process of the Sendai Conference had a bureau of 10 members. It should be noted, for aiming at a balanced composition of the bureau, that the membership of the UN is divided into five regions as compared to the six of WHO.
38. Finally, as noted above, an arrangement sometimes used to good effect in complex UN negotiations is the self-appointment of a group of “friends”, i.e. supportive and influential member states’ representatives who do not have a statutory role but support informally the chair(s) by, *inter alia*, engaging in consultations on specific issues, discussing draft language and possible substantive solutions. While the relative informality of this kind of arrangement may be helpful, there is a risk of ‘crowding’ the process by adding a group of active actors on top of an already (possibly sizable) bureau.
39. The preparatory process of the Sendai Conference distinguished between ‘technical’ and ‘political’ parts of a framework, with crucial political questions left for the inter-governmental summit. While the distinction may seem artificial, there are often parts of a negotiated text that go into substantive details and on which agreement may be more easily reached. Even though states should own the whole framework, there is often a space for the secretariat of the process to control and guide work on the more programmatic/technical components of the framework, e.g. by convening dedicated meetings of governmental experts. This could help in ‘depoliticizing’ part of the text, facilitating agreement and focusing political attention on the more controversial points.
40. A crucial aspect of the preparatory process is the preparation of a zero draft of the instrument in question and the determination of who will be in charge of this. There is often the possibility of issuing invitations for proposals on specific issues, with facilitators stewarding

the process and synthesizing multiple proposals into compromise formulations. Immediate precedents show a variety of approaches:

- Sendai Framework (A/RES/68/211): Establishment of an Open-ended Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee in charge of, *inter alia*, reviewing the substantive preparations for the conference (para. 13).
- Global Compact for Migration (A/RES/71/280): zero draft prepared by co-facilitators after two phases of consultations with relevant stakeholders (para. 27).

41. Another important aspect to consider is secretariat support. Precedents show that, when a summit or conference is launched by the UN, the UN Secretariat will be closely involved:

- Sendai Framework (A/RES/68/211): requests “the Secretariat to provide conference services for the preparatory process and the Third World Conference itself, the costs thereof to be borne by the host country, on the understanding that the Secretariat will ensure that its existing human resources are utilized to the maximum extent possible, without further charge to the host country” (para. 24).
- The Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (A/RES/71/1): UN Secretary-General requested to “provide appropriate support for the negotiations” (Annex 2, para. 12) (see also A/RES/71/280, paras. 10-13).

42. While the modalities for the provision of secretariat services would be formalized in the UN General Assembly resolution, there will be a need to support pre-resolution activities and preparations. Relevant precedents include joint secretariats among the organizations most involved, with division of labour and responsibilities among key organizations, in particular WHO, agreed at an early stage to avoid damaging rivalries or turf fights.

E. Summit

43. The formal convening of the summit may be contained in the initial resolution or, in some cases, in a later resolution that reflects progress made during the preparatory process.¹² This will probably be part of the negotiations leading up to the first resolution. In this case, the later resolution is likely to spell out in some detail the modalities and procedures for the final conference.
44. Many of the considerations made in the previous sections are applicable to the final conference and will not be repeated here. Particular reference can be made to provisions for participation of non-state actors and other stakeholders, rules of procedure, bureau, and so on. As for the preparatory process, there is a rather consolidated set of practices from previous UN intergovernmental processes that can be drawn upon to fine-tune formal arrangements for the conference.
45. A point of significant importance is often the venue of the conference. Previous comparable conferences have been either held at UN Headquarters (or UN major offices in Geneva, Vienna or Nairobi, depending on the topic of the conference) or held in a country offering to host the conference. Countries hosting a UN conference usually shoulder a significant portion of its costs and take responsibility for logistical and practical arrangements. Conversely, it is customary that a senior official of the host country be elected president of the conference. Hosting a major (especially if successful) UN conference often has high symbolic value for the country concerned, which often translates into an active involvement in the preparatory and negotiating phase. While this involvement can be positive, it may also be perceived as an attempt to unduly influence the course of the process; this direct influence would be avoided if the conference were to be held at a neutral venue such as the UN Headquarters.

¹² This was, for example, the case of the Global Compact (see A/RES/71/1 and A/RES/71/280).