

UN High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response

Intervention to multi-stakeholder Panel 1: The world together: multilateral action for coordinated pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, including sharing of best practices and lessons learnt so far

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates, and colleagues.

Effective pandemic prevention, preparedness and response saves millions of lives. The Political Declaration that Member States consider today reaffirms this. The task before us now is to act on it.

Action begins with adequate and sustainable financing. Preparedness costs far less than response, yet an annual preparedness gap of \$15 billion remains that States must work to close. Domestic resources come first, supported by international financing mechanisms to support lower-resourced countries. Operationalizing the Coordinating Financial Mechanism in the WHO International Health Regulations and the Pandemic Agreement will help close the gap. The World Bank's Pandemic Fund can play a major role if it is adequately financed.

To prevent the next pandemic, we must adopt a One Health approach. The majority of emerging disease threats begin in animals. Preventing their emergence demands comprehensive action targeted to the drivers of zoonotic spillover across human, animal and environmental health.

PPPR also requires strong health systems. Primary health care, a skilled workforce, and strong laboratory and surveillance infrastructure need to be in place before the next pandemic threat emerges.

It also depends on science. Investing in scientific innovation and open exchange of scientific information, including pathogen materials and sequence data, is essential. It is equally important to share the benefits of that research – vaccines, tests, and treatments – equitably. COVID-19 showed the cost of failing to do so.

Finally, effective PPPR requires good governance and accountability. Political commitment at the highest level should be sustained, measured and reviewed. The WHO Pandemic Agreement has been adopted. Yet work continues on its vital PABS Annex. I urge all Member States to conclude it without delay, so that the Agreement can open for signature and ratification, preparing the world to confront the next pandemic threat.