



## HIGH LEVEL MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON PANDEMIC PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

20 September 2023

United Nations Headquarters, New York

### Background

The High-level Meeting (HLM) on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response with the overall theme “Making the world safer: Creating and maintaining political momentum and solidarity for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response” is convened in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [76/301](#) and [77/275](#). It will be held on 20 September 2023 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The meeting will bring together Member States, observers of the General Assembly, the United Nations system, representatives of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC and representatives of organizations with special accreditation. The objective of the meeting is to further mobilize political momentum, including through the integration of a multisectoral approach towards pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

This HLM intends to provide political support to, and complement the work of, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and that of the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) that will consider potential amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005).

The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare inequities among countries, showed that the world was not prepared to deal with an event of that scale or complexity, and exposed the serious shortcomings at the country, regional and global levels in preparedness for, timely and effective prevention and detection of, and response to potential health emergencies, including in the capacity and resilience of health systems. The COVID-19 crisis exposed the need to better prepare for future health emergencies, including to address secondary impacts, which require a multi-sectoral approach. While the COVID-19 pandemic no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), its impact is still being felt. As of 16 August 2023, there have been over 769 million COVID-19 cases confirmed to the World Health Organization (WHO) and over 6.9 million reported deaths<sup>1</sup>. Beyond the health sector, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on livelihoods and led to a global poverty increase for the first time in a generation<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, the International Monetary Fund indicated that the global economy would lose \$12.5 trillion between 2022 and 2024 due to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis.

Pandemic prevention, preparedness and response must prioritize the need for equity and requires a multi-sectoral and whole-of-government approach, and therefore it is important to address socio-economic, gender equality, human rights, and educational impacts, which are all areas of traditional focus of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The HLM is important in order to leverage

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<sup>1</sup> [World Health Organization COVID-19 Dashboard](#) (last consulted 18 August 2023).

<sup>2</sup> [World Bank World Development Report 2022](#) (last consulted 18 August 2023).

support to countries in building capacities, encourage investments in a multi-sectoral approach to pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advancing multilateral financing, as well as other areas of support.

### **Format**

The HLM will be held fully in-person and will consist of an opening segment, a plenary, two interactive multi-stakeholder panels and a closing segment.

The themes of the multi-stakeholder panels are as follows.

- Panel 1: Ensuring equity through governance and accountability for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response by utilizing multi-sectoral coordination at all levels
  - Question 1: How can a rules-based system within an international legal framework advance pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and deliver on equity?
  - Question 2: Applying the lessons learned from previous public health emergencies including COVID-19, how can the international community ensure responsible stewardship, partnership, and accountability to commit to and deliver on better pandemic prevention, preparedness and response?
  - Question 3: How can we ensure multi-sectoral and whole-of-society coordination to guarantee all voices are heard and build/maintain trust, both before and during crises?
  
- Panel 2: Ensuring equity through capacity building for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and harnessing timely, sustainable and innovative financing and investment
  - Question 1: What essential capacities, systems and tools do we need at the global, regional and national levels to ensure timely development of, equitable access to and distribution of pandemic-related products?
  - Question 2: How can we efficiently strengthen our health systems for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and promote the adequate protection and training of our health and care workforces?
  - Question 3: How can we ensure additional predictable and sustainable funding for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response at all times, including surge financing during crises, looking at both existing initiatives as well as new and innovative mechanisms?

### **Participation**

The high-level meeting is open to Member States, observers of the General Assembly, the United Nations system, representatives of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC and representatives of organizations with special accreditation.

### **Outcome**

The high-level meeting shall approve a concise and action-oriented political declaration, agreed in advance by consensus through intergovernmental negotiations, to be submitted by the President of the General Assembly for adoption by the General Assembly

### **Logistics**

A detailed logistics note covering the three health-related meetings has been circulated with this concept note and will be available on the website of the President of the General Assembly.