



Media Update: Second Report on Progress

The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response
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Uncorrected Transcript

Speakers:

Co-Chairs of the Independent Panel:

The Right Honourable Helen Clark
Her Excellency Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

Moderator: Christine McNab, Communication Lead, The Independent Panel Secretariat

Note: Here is a link to the [video recording of this media briefing](#).

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Christine McNab 01:08

An early note: As you gather, please chat in your name/ affiliation into the chat box, so everyone can see who is present please.

Greetings everyone. Thank you for joining this briefing on the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response's Second Report on Progress – this one to the ongoing WHO Executive Board. A first progress report was made to the World Health Assembly in November last year.

My name is Christine McNab, and I'm the Communication Lead at the Panel's Secretariat. I hope you all have the report, and the news release. I also want to clarify something, the report itself has been linked from the WHO EB site for several days, as is an EB requirement. We planned for the Co=Chair to address media today – the same day as they will present to the Executive Board. I'd like to underscore that this actual briefing and any quote are still under embargo.

As you probably know, the Independent Panel was established by the WHO Director-General in July 2020, in response to the [World Health Assembly resolution 73.1](#). The Panel began its impartial, independent and comprehensive review in September 2020.

Its mission is to provide an evidence-based path for the future, grounded in lessons of the present and the past to ensure countries and global institutions, including specifically WHO, effectively address health threats.

Today, as I've said, is the presentation of a [Progress Report](#) – the Panel will present a [main report](#) to the 74th World Health Assembly scheduled for May this year.

I'd like to now welcome the Co-Chairs – Her Excellency, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf – former President of Liberia and Nobel Prize Laureate, and the Right Honourable Helen Clark, former Prime Minister of New Zealand.

The Co-Chairs will give opening remarks and then the floor will be open for questions from media.

Members of the media, please use the 'raise hands' feature – when called on your mic will be unmuted and you can ask your question. Maximum two questions per reporter please, thank you.

And with that, I'd like the Right Honourable Helen Clark to begin.

Right Honorable Helen Clark 03:55

Greetings from New Zealand, twelve hours ahead of Geneva. And good afternoon to my esteemed Co-Chair in Liberia.

The Second Report on Progress is the result of three months of work by the full Panel since 17 September. It's been informed by the review of hundreds of documents, expert consultations across many sectors, case studies, submissions from Member States, academia, civil society and citizens; and almost 100 interviews with people on the frontlines of pandemic preparedness and response.

Let me take a moment to address some of the news reporting to date on the report. We do want to stress that one of our tasks is to identify lessons learned from this pandemic. We can all agree that we never want our world to be in this terrible predicament again.

Our job is to look back, with the benefit of hindsight, at areas that emerge as gaps in the response; and to look forward to recommend ways to fill those gaps.

The Panel recognises that many people worked very hard to identify and mitigate the new disease threat in early 2020. Our report does not question their commitment. But we would like institutions to be better equipped when new health threats emerge.

The impact on human lives – with now 2 million dead and around 95 million reported to have been infected, the great strain placed on health systems, and the scale of social and economic devastation brought about by the pandemic make it clear that the world must do two things: act more decisively now to curb the pandemic, and fundamentally reset its preparedness and response systems to help ensure that this doesn't happen again. These points are at the core of the Panel's Progress Report.

On the first point – with an average of about 680,000 reported cases per day this January alone – we underscore that course correction in handling the pandemic is needed now. We urge countries to immediately and consistently adopt the public health measures which will reduce the spread and the impact of COVID-19.

Detecting cases as early as possible through testing, contact tracing and isolation, and reducing spread through physical distancing and mask wearing are measures which are just as relevant now as they were at the outset. They must be put to use to reduce transmission, illness, and death.



And yes, there are vaccines and there is a light at the end of the tunnel – but the tunnel is still long, and this pandemic, continues at pace, right now.

On the second point, the Panel believes that the international system for alert and response has the trappings of an analog system in a digital age. Pathogens can travel in minutes and hours, not in days and weeks. Despite hard work from many people trying to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 in those early days, it was still a month after an alarm was sounded in Wuhan that the international system sounded its highest alarm available – the Public Health Emergency of International Concern. And even then, with COVID-19 spreading in many countries – the ‘emergency’ was not felt strongly enough, and COVID-19 continued to spread.

The Panel is looking at what mechanisms would be needed to work at the speed necessary, to be able integrate signals from local clinics and laboratories into real-time, globally available data gathering and decision-making tools.

We will have more to say on that in our May report.

And with that, I’d like to turn to my Co-Chair, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Her Excellency Madame Ellen Johnson Sirleaf 09:04

Thank you, Helen.

I want to echo your point about the Panel’s aims. Ours is a serious effort to learn - to collect and sieve through evidence – and determine lessons from this pandemic. We are not here to assign blame, but rather to assess what could be improved, and to make concrete recommendations that will help the world to respond – better and faster - in the future.

The Panel’s report has noted areas where time to act took too long.

But I would also like to highlight a point that was missed in yesterday’s headlines. Our report makes it clear that the world is more reliant on an effective WHO than ever before. While Member States turn to the WHO for leadership, they have kept it under-powered and under-resourced to do the job expected of it.

This is an issue the Panel is looking at. The bottom line is WHO has no powers to enforce anything or investigate of its own volition within a country. When it comes to a potential new disease threat, all WHO can do is ask and hope to be invited in. The Panel is asking whether that is enough.

Overall, Member States are looking at WHO for leadership, coordination, and guidance, but are not equipping it with the authority, the access, or the funding needed to provide that. This clearly isn’t working. We are looking carefully at this.

We also note there have been many panels and commissions that have led to many reports and recommendations in the last decade to respond to health threats. Fourteen reports, and almost too many recommendations to count. We can never know how failure to adopt these may have contributed to the situation we are in today.

But I can tell you this. Our recommendations will be specific, bold, actionable and time-bound.

We believe it's time countries invest in real change – investment in pandemic preparedness is an investment in collective health security. We've lost 2 million people – and an estimated 6 trillion in global GDP in the last year. That is argument enough to invest in change.

Finally, we must address equity. The pandemic response has deepened inequalities – for poor countries, for poor people, for vulnerable people. We note and are impressed by the speed at which science has brought us vaccines – **but** the inequitable access to vaccines is amongst the most glaring examples of inequality in our world today.

The current vaccine roll-out is favouring wealthy countries due to narrow national interest and economic power. A world where the wealthy receive 100% coverage and the poor 20% is on the wrong footing – both for justice, and for pandemic control.

In an interdependent world where normal commercial flight volume is more than 100,000 flights carrying 11 million people in the air per day, no one is protected until everyone is protected. No one is safe until everyone is safe.

And, where you are born should not determine where you stand in the vaccine queue.

This pandemic has us all noticing the inequalities because they have become so exposed. Recognizing these and studying these gives us an opportunity to recommend ways to address them.

Thank you.

Christine McNab 15:08

Thank you very much President Sirleaf, thank you Prime Minister Clark. I will now turn to your questions. Once again, members of the media: please use the *raise hand* function. When called upon, your mic will be unmuted, and you can ask your question. Repeating again, please a maximum of two questions per reporter. When you do unmute your mic, please also state your name and your media affiliation. We have about 25 minutes for questions and we'll begin with Gunilla von Hall. Thank you.

Gunilla von Hall (Svenska Dagbladet) 15:42

Thanks, Gunilla von Hall, I work for Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet.

You're saying there were failures in the international system for alert and response, but that lessons have been learned. So, what should countries have done differently? Perhaps, specifically, when it comes to China? And what could WHO have done differently?



And my second question is, what do you think that the WHO expert group in China realistically can achieve that makes the world better prepared for future pandemics? After all, they're coming in one year after the pandemic started, so that seems to be difficult work. Thanks.

Prime Minister Clark 16:35

First, let me stress that this is an interim report, and we will be publishing a full chronology— which we've invested a lot of time and effort into, and in which I think the facts speak for themselves as to what was done when and where the gaps and rapidity were, shall we say?

The fact is that the Wuhan Municipal Health Authority issued a public bulletin describing the 27 cases— referred to as pneumonia of unknown origin— on the 31st of December. That was already a week delay after the identification, and there wasn't any lockdown in Wuhan until the 23rd. So, we are very determined to spell out the facts as we see them.

I think, with respect to WHO, again, we are looking at what it did and when. We're also very conscious, as President Sirleaf said, that WHO is underpowered for the expectations we have on it. We have referred, in the report, to the concept that the precautionary principle could have been applied from at least around mid-January on the issue of human-to-human transmission. And that wasn't done.

It may well be that the International Health Regulations are an impediment to applying a precautionary principle, but then we are a panel that's looking at what needs to change. So, we need to raise these issues as issues that need very serious consideration. I think also the Panel, in its discussion about the chronology, has been very conscious that even after the declaration of a public health emergency of international concern— which came a month after this bulletin from Wuhan— even then, February was a pretty quiet month for action with respect to mitigating the spread of a pandemic.

I think it's important to note that we were living in 2020, in a highly globally interconnected world. A pathogen like this doesn't sit around to move by foot as it might have in the Middle Ages. If it's highly contagious, it's going to get out there, and all the more reason for precautionary approach, but we do find the lack of concerted response in many countries in February somewhat mystifying. So, we're reflecting on all these issues. And when the Panel comes back with the full report, we will have more to say, obviously, about what concretely can be done.

President Sirleaf 19:48

Even if WHO had been more empowered to have more timely and effective information and communication to countries, we also know that *countries* need to have better response national systems.

So, it's a question of not having the capacity on both sides to effectively respond in a timely manner. Let me just add that.

Christine McNab 20:25

Good, thank you President Sirleaf, Prime Minister Clark.

There was a second question also from Gunilla, asking about the origins group. Gunilla, maybe you could repeat that question, please.

Prime Minister Clark 20:35

We did hear the question, but I mean, really, we're not the origins group. We're a separate panel, and I don't think we have any particular comment to make about their work.

Christine McNab 20:45

Thank you. Okay, let's move to the next question. We'll move to Laurent Sierro. Please, if you can state your media affiliation as well.

Laurent Sierro (Keystone ATS) 20:53

Laurent Sierro, Swiss News Agency. Thank you for taking my question. So, in the interim report, you mentioned China, and you mentioned WHO. One of the US allegations towards WHO was its connection— which was considered as too important— to China. Have you found any indication that would match that observation, and that would show that there was a proximity that was excessive, and that would have hampered the response of the first stage? Thank you.

Prime Minister Clark 21:37

What we've been following is a chronology of what happened when and where. And considering, I guess, what may or may not have constrained WHO. As President Sirleaf spelled out and may like to come back and make the point again, WHO is not empowered for the task: it has no right to access a country, it has no right to go and investigate. Everything is done on the basis of cooperation. Is this enough? In this day and age, where a pathogen like this can spread so quickly, we need to look at the powers of WHO, we need to look at what the International Health Regulations do and don't do and whether they can be improved. And then, are Member States up for the task of empowering a global health organization to do the job that needs to be done? But those are all issues to consider, that President Sirleaf might like to emphasize that point again.

President Sirleaf 22:51

I can add to that to what Prime Minister Clark has said. WHO has not been given sufficient resources, they don't have a system that qualifies for modern age communication today. Until we can find the means to equip them properly, it is difficult for them to have timely intervention or timely information to pass on to Member States, who themselves are under-capacitated to be able to respond effectively and quickly when a pandemic strikes.

I think what the report is trying to do is to point out these insufficiencies, draw attention to them, and see to it that the world begins to take action to address these long-standing requirements that have been pointed out over and over, but have not been acted upon by national or international institutions.



Christine McNab 24:07

Thank you very much both. Next, we will go to Jamey Keaten. Jamey, I believe you're with the Associated Press.

Jamey Keaten (Associated Press) 24:17

Correct. Thank you so much, Christine, for taking my question. And Happy New Year to Madame Clark and to Madame Sirleaf.

You mentioned in the report that China and WHO could have done more. We at the AP found that China did not immediately share the genetic sequence. They sat on it for about a week, which WHO knew at the time, and did not share critical outbreak data about patients. So, what more did your panel actually find out? Is there any information that China did not share that causes concern for you?

And then my second question is just for Madame Clark. You had said that WHO would be an open book. What internal documents has the WHO shared with the Panel? And have these included recordings of meetings and emails between staff? Thank you so much.

Prime Minister Clark 25:17

On that last point, I'm not personally across to great detail of what has been requested from WHO, but as I've said in the past, WHO pledged complete openness, and we have no reason whatsoever to fault the response that that they have given to this panel. They want to get to the truth of the matter as well. But, as I say, we will have more to say about the chronology at a later stage. And I think, as a panel, we're very determined to be evidence and fact based, that what we say will draw on what we have been able to establish as the fact. In doing that, of course, we are very mindful of a lot of very, very detailed reporting, including from AP. And we've read all of that with great interest, and we endeavor to triangulate across the various sources of information to produce as authoritative a chronology as we can.

Christine McNab 26:32

Thank you. President Sirleaf, would you like to add anything to that?

President Sirleaf 22:35

No, I think the Prime Minister has answered it adequately.

Christine McNab 26:37

Good, thank you very much. Next in the queue, we will ask Peter Kenny, please. Peter, please state your media affiliation and your questions. Thank you.

Peter Kenny (Anadolu Agency) 26:49

Thank you. My name is Peter Kenny, I work for Anadolu agency. I know that the President Johnson Sirleaf spoke about the powerlessness of WHO to do many of the tasks that it should do. And, I'm just wondering if in your examination into the institution, you think that it is reformable. Because, you know, people have spoken about the reform of many UN institutions, including the Security Council, which they say is unreformable, because of the P-5 veto system. Do you think that the WHO can be reformed?

And I would also just like to make an observation, as the Vice President of the Foreign Correspondents Association of Switzerland, that this is another blind webinar, which the WHO regularly has called press conferences, and they are not open press conferences. Thank you.

Christine McNab 27:53

Thanks, Peter, and we have made an effort today to ensure that people are typing in if they're present in the room, who they are and who they're with. But that's noted. We are at a time, as well, where these sorts of webinars are one of the only ways we can all get together, in a sense, and hold these sorts of press events.

President Sirleaf 28:13

I'll take the question. I do believe that the WHO is reformable. And I think our report, which is still ongoing— what you have before you is a progress report. Will, by the time we present our findings to the General Assembly, will have the kinds of recommendations that the World Assembly will want to look at as a means of trying to grant WHO the power and the resources it needs to carry out the job that they have mandated.

Let me also mention that the Security Council is also reformable and should be reformed. While that is not a business for this panel, it is a general business of trying to address inequities in the world. So, there will be other areas of dealing with that, and I hope that the Security Council will also support the recommendations of this panel to enable WHO and other institutions to carry out the mandate that they would like to see at a time when they're calling for changes in the global architecture.

Christine McNab 29:27

Thank you, President Sirleaf. Prime Minister Clark, anything to add to that?

Prime Minister Clark 29:31

Entirely agree with President Sirleaf, and I would also say that it is obviously important that the WHO can be improved— to improve its effectiveness— but that's in the hands of Member States. And our panel will be appealing to Member States to make the changes that need to be made. That includes the International Health Regulations, and it may well involve ideas for other kinds of international instruments. But, basically, if you want global health security, you have to have the tools that make that



possible. And the willingness of Member States to accept those tools and abide by their provisions is extremely important in getting effective responses.

Christine McNab 30:24

Thank you both. Next, we will go to Jamil Chade. Please, Jamil, if you want to state your media affiliation and ask your question.

Jamil Chade (UOL Brazil) 30:35

Thank you. I'm a journalist from Brazil. My question is about basically the behavior of leaders that opted for a, I would say a denial— in the beginning, at least, or for several months of the crisis— of the dimension of the crisis. We had in Brazil, Bolsonaro saying that it would be a small flu and nothing to worry about. How much were these behaviors considered by you? And did they have any impact in this lack of response by governments?

Secondly, I understand that you went around countries asking for their data as well. Are you getting cooperation by everyone? Are you getting the information that you want from every country? Thank you very much.

Christine McNab 31:40

Thank you, Jamil. President Sirleaf, should we start with you on this question?

President Sirleaf 31:46

Behavior by anyone— individual or nation— matters. In this particular case, we're still trying to find out what has caused a lack of a full response, timely response, by leaders in all nations. Our different conferences that are being held, that brings these leaders to the table, try to understand what are the system breakdowns? What are the leadership breakdowns?

So, yes, behaviors have mattered. But I also want to focus you on the leaders that *did* do what was necessary. And I dare say they were all women. If you look at the examples of the women leadership around the globe, and the action they took quickly to enforce all of those things like the mask, social distancing, and all of those— once they put them into effect in a timely manner, they were able to contain the virus. And so, yes, we hope that leadership does matter. And we hope that all of the inequities exposed by our report will bring more attention to the fact that behavior by leaders all over the world will help to put in place preparedness systems to prevent another pandemic.

Prime Minister Clark 33:33

Just also adding to that, we do have a work stream for the panel which is looking very closely at the range of national responses. And from that, we aim to distill what were the key attributes of what

seemed to be more successful responses and keeping down rates of transmission and, obviously, keeping down death rates. So, you know, in broad terms, yes leadership has an enormous amount to do with it, as President Sirleaf has said, and, and as a group, the women leaders on average have done pretty well.

That speaks to a particular style of leadership, which is often associated with women, but when used also by men can be very, very effective. And that style of leadership is often one that is more consultative, more people-centered, more ready to listen and take advice, and base decisions on the evidence. We will certainly have more to say on the report about what have been the attributes of the range of responses.

Christine McNab 34:52

Thank you, Prime Minister Clark, and I think Jamil had one other question about to what degree were countries cooperating with requests for information and for contributions.

Prime Minister Clark 35:01

My understanding is that where the team that is gathering the information on this has gone out, it has received cooperation. But if that's not the case, I'm sure you'll read about that in the report. But certainly, as Panel Co-Chairs, we are not aware of a lack of cooperation.

Christine McNab 35:24

And I can also add that on the website, www.theindependentpanel.org, we've been asking for contributions from various stakeholders, including Member States. You'll see on the website, under the "Your Contributions" section, specific contributions from Member States that anyone can read.

I'd like to move next to Agnes Pedrero. Please, state your media affiliation and your questions. Thank you.

Agnes Pedrero (AFP) 35:53

Good morning, everybody. Thank you for taking my question. The question is about the reports, which says that the actual incentives for cooperation for countries are insufficient to ensure the effective participation of states in the international system with discipline. So, how could it be possible to introduce disciplinary measures into the system? Do you think there should be some sort of penalties for countries that doesn't give alerts early, or how could the penalties be implemented? For example, for a country that doesn't allow WHO to come in the country? What recommendation do you give of that? Thank you.

Prime Minister Clark 36:44

We're not at the recommendation stage at the moment, but one would hope that one of the learnings from this pandemic has been that it's in every Member State's interests that all states act transparently and quickly when a threat like this emerges. I mean, one can understand that there might be concerns about the repercussions for travel and trade. But the reality is that if a pandemic gets out of hand, those



repercussions are going to be vastly more, and not just for where the pathogen originates but, of course globally, as we've seen.

I think a key learning should be that we're all in this boat together, on a relatively small Planet Earth. An old saying, but if you don't hang together, you hang separately. We just have to see coming out of this a reinforcement of the importance of collective action, of the multilateral spirit, of the multilateral system and its leadership.

President Sirleaf 38:06

Member States have experienced death and suffering in their communities, in their nations. They would see this report and its recommendations, we hope, as an opportunity for reflection: national reflections on what may be required by them to be able to ensure that there isn't another pandemic that will cause so much suffering to them.

We're listening today at discussions going around the world, and we're hearing Member States say that they, too, are listening as to what they will do in their countries. At the end of the day, our report can make recommendations, but it is the Member States that will drive the reform. The decision will be theirs. And I do believe that they are going to be ready to prepare themselves and to take the necessary action to save their own lives and the livelihoods of their people.

Christine McNab 39:25

Thank you both very much. We have time for just a couple more questions. If you click *lower your hand* if you've already asked your question, just so we're certain to catch as many people as we can. I'd like Stéphane Bussard, please, to ask the next question. Thank you.

Stéphane Bussard (Le Temps) 39:42

Thank you very much. President Sirleaf, Prime Minister Clark: you talked about the need to empower WHO. I was wondering what specifically you would ask for. Would there be a need to, for example, dramatically increase the assessed contributions? Because, do you have the feeling that the financial situation of WHO may make WHO vulnerable to Member States pressures? That was my first question, and my second question: as far as the International Health Regulations are concerned, you're asking for reformed use. Do you think it would be necessary, for example, to introduce sanctions within the International Health Regulations? Thank you very much.

Christine McNab 40:40

And to clarify, Stéphane is with Le Temps, Swiss Newspaper. President Sirleaf, would you like to take the first question on WHO?

President Sirleaf 40:54

I believe our report has been very clear about the findings that one has been able to put together regarding the systems at WHO. Just what needs to be done to be able to empower them, what has changed in the contributions— the resources that they get— so that assessed contributions are much more so that they don't have to go looking for voluntary contributions from Member States. This, of course, will empower them to act in a more timely manner.

I believe that our report will make recommendations that will go beyond the question about assessed and voluntary contributions, that there are many things that can be done to equip WHO and the chain of WHO as it relates to the Regional Offices, the National offices of WHO. All of those will need to be equipped with what it takes to have the authority and resources to do the job that we want, and the mandate may also have to be changed. Again, Member States will be looking at recommendations and being able to act to that.

Christine McNab 42:21

Thank you, President Sirleaf. Prime Minister Clark: anything to add to that, and perhaps also address the question regarding the International Health Regulations? Thank you.

Prime Minister Clark 42:30

I mean, the funding of WHO is woeful. There's been a comparison made as to how much less it is than, say, the annual budget of one major hospital in New York City. I mean, you know, this is our global health organization: we want it to do well, we need it to do well, but it's been kept on pretty short rations. Having to run around to raise money for specific causes, because the baseline funding is not good— in the end, you get what you pay for. And, you know, you try to make the silk purse out of the proverbial sow's ear, but the money can only stretch so far. So, definitely funding, as President Sirleaf has stressed, is an issue.

And then there's also the issue of the extent to which the current system is constraining WHO from acting decisively. One of the points we've made is that it's a bit odd to us why the Emergency Committee was slow to act, why the precautionary principle couldn't be applied to human-to-human transmission. WHO is quite constrained, and in our consideration, we'll be looking at whether those constraints can be removed.

Christine McNab 44:00

Thanks so much. I think we have time now for one more question, as the Co-Chairs will soon be presenting to the Executive Board. For what I think will be the final question, could I please go to Anne Gulland from the Daily Telegraph?

Anne Gulland (Daily Telegraph) 44:18

Hi, thanks very much for taking my question. You talked in the report about a pandemic being declared: could have been declared earlier or the word pandemic could have been used earlier. And I just wonder what impact you think might have had by doing that.



Also, do you think— you've talked a lot about WHO and it being constrained etc.— are you confident that countries would give up any powers or would enable WHO to come and investigate future outbreaks? That's always been the problem, I think, so I just wondered whether you think countries are willing to give up some kind of powers to WHO. Thank you.

Prime Minister Clark 45:07

That's the \$64 question. Are member states prepared to have stronger powers for WHO, under the International Health Regulations or another international document? You know, when Chernobyl happened, that was a moment at the International Atomic Energy Agency when its powers were greatly strengthened: powers of inspection and access. Is that this moment for WHO and the global health system? The member states are going to have to face up to this. But, as President Sirleaf stressed, you know, countries have been badly hurt by this, many people have died, health systems have been stressed beyond endurance— health workforce and its entirety, incredibly stressed, economies and societies deeply impacted. Are we going to stand on our dignity as nation states and say that we don't want inspection and access? Or are we going to say anything that will stop this from happening again is worth having? I think that that is the question, and wait for our recommendations, and then see how they are greeted.

(In response to the first question) I think language does matter. And of course, you know, WHO is going by the book that it's gone. And in the book that it's got, pandemic has no legal meaning. But the problem is that “public health emergency of international concern” is quite a mouthful. They're declared from time to time; the worst hasn't happened in modern times. So, it doesn't exactly rattle the cage. I think when Dr. Tedros eventually decided to use the word, that did get people sitting up. But then, of course, we were also starting to see very tragic reports from systems becoming overburdened as well. So, one of the issues is whether the term should have a legal meaning in the system or not.

Christine McNab 47:37

Good, thank you. President Sirleaf, any final thoughts on this one?

President Sirleaf 47:44

Throughout history, Member States have risen, to address challenges of global concern. I have faith that this time— seeing the consequences of what has happened— we will see them rise to this challenge. I don't know what exact measures they will take— that's in their hands— but, I have trust in the fact that they want a better future, and they will do what is required.

Christine McNab 48:24

Thank you very much to our Co-Chairs President Sirleaf and Prime Minister Clark. We will wrap up now today, again, as the Co-Chairs have to present very shortly to the Executive Board.

If you have further questions, feel free to send them to me and I can get answers for you. I'm at McNabC@ipppr.org. We will also be publishing the Co-Chairs' remarks to the Executive Board shortly after they're made. Do tune in for that if you can: it should be happening in 10-15 minutes from now on, provided they are on time.

All right, thanks again. I'd like to thank all media for joining and again, a big thank you to our Co-Chairs for being here today. Thank you and do stay in touch. I look forward to hearing from you. Goodbye