

# **The Intergovernmental Negotiating Body must improve modalities, inclusion, and transparency for negotiation of an effective pandemic agreement to prevent pandemics**

*A Joint Statement from Chairs, Co-Chairs, Principals, Members and Advisors to The Elders, The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board, The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, Pandemic Action Network, The Panel for a Global Public Health Convention and Spark Street Advisors*

10 July 2024

A pandemic agreement remains crucial to complete the set of international rules aimed at preventing cross-border epidemics and pandemics, and to protect the eight billion people of the world better if a pandemic develops. The world needs an effective pandemic agreement that ensures sustained preparedness and response financing, equitable access to medical countermeasures, and an accountable system.

We appreciate WHO Member States' stated ongoing commitment to negotiate and adopt a pandemic agreement. We hope that this can be completed in 2024, appreciating that there can still be time to work through detailed arrangements on specific articles following adoption.

In the interests of effectiveness, transparency, and countering misinformation, we recommend that Member States agree to improved modalities for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body at its next meeting on July 16-17. Improvements should include:

**1) Incorporating lessons from the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations including:**

- a) the Co-Chairs' efforts to build trust amongst Member States by, for example, explaining why certain texts were proposed; and aiming for full consideration of all Member State views.
- b) A systematic schedule of negotiation for each outstanding article.
- c) Scheduled working groups, that ensure full representation of all Member States in whatever configuration Member States agree, and participation of independent experts including civil society.

**2) Formal inclusion and consultation of independent experts including civil society:**

Previous INB meetings have been far too closed to relevant stakeholders, limiting input and access to very few open sessions. Future INB meetings must find a balance that ensures participation and consultation with relevant stakeholders, including in working groups, as well as methods to communicate the invitation to participate in a timely way so that people

can make arrangements to travel. We support the call from over [140 civil society organizations](#) and their supporters to be officially included and participate in all meetings.

**3) Transparent and regular communications on progress and remaining issues:** This includes provision of documents well in advance of meetings; updated documents during the meetings and scheduled daily briefings. The INB bureau's efforts to offer daily briefings to relevant stakeholders in the final days of the last meeting in May were appreciated. We recommend that such an approach continues, with daily scheduled updates on progress and remaining issues from the Bureau during the INB meetings, as well as a briefing before, and at the end of the meeting. The Bureau should also consider specific briefings to key stakeholders including Parliamentarians.

This will enable relevant stakeholders to make constructive comments on texts, and enables all stakeholders, including Parliamentarians, to help counter misinformation, and garner support for the pandemic agreement in wider society.

We wish Member States a successful INB on 16-17 July and will continue to offer inputs which we believe are essential for the successful conclusion of a pandemic agreement that will serve all people.

**Signed,**

Chairs, Co-Chairs, Principals, Members and Advisors to The Elders, The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB), The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (The Independent Panel), Pandemic Action Network, The Panel for a Global Public Health Convention (PGPHC), and Spark Street Advisors:

Dr Ibrahim Abubakar, Dean of the University College London Faculty of Population Health Sciences and Member of the GPMB

Dr Palitha Abeykoon, Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Health of Sri Lanka and Member of the GPMB

Mr. Aggrey Aluso, Director, Africa Region, Pandemic Action Network (PAN) & Incoming Executive Director, Resilience Action Network Africa (RANA)

Ms Bente Angell-Hansen, Norwegian former diplomat and Member of the GPMB

Dr Mauricio Cárdenas, former Minister of Finance of Colombia, and Member of The Independent Panel

The Rt Hon. Helen Clark, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Member of The Elders, Co-Chair of The Independent Panel

The Honorable Dr. Mark Dybul, diplomat, physician and medical researcher, Member of The Independent Panel

Prof Victor J. Dzau, President of the United States National Academy of Medicine (NAM) and Member of the GPMB

Prof Patricia J. Garcia, Former Minister of Health of Peru, and Member of the PGPHC

Ms Bience Gawanas, former Under-Secretary-General and Special Advisor on Africa to the United Nations Secretary-General and Member of the GPMB

Dr Jayati Ghosh, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and Member of the GPMB

Prof Lawrence O. Gostin, Professor and Chair in Global Health Law and Member of the PGPHC

Ms Jane Halton, Chair, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and Member of the PGPHC

Dr Naoko Ishii, Former Deputy Vice Minister of Finance of Japan and Member of the GPMB

HE Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia, Member of The Elders and Co-Chair of The Independent Panel

Dr Michel Kazatchkine, former Executive Director of The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and Member of The Independent Panel

Prof Ilona Kickbusch, Founder and Chair of the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and Member of the GPMB

Dr Ricardo B. Leite, President and Founder, UNITE Global Parliamentarians Network and Member of the PGPHC

Dr Joanne Liu, former International President of Doctors Without Borders and Member of The Independent Panel

Sir Mark Lowcock, Former Head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Member of the GPMB

Prof Jemilah Mahmood, Professor and Director, Sunway Centre for Planetary Health, and Member of the PGPHC

Ms Rosemary McCarney, former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the Office of the United Nations and to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament based in Geneva, Switzerland, and advisor to The Independent Panel

The Rt Hon. David Miliband, former Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, and Member of The Independent Panel

Dr Anders Nordström, former Global Health Ambassador for Sweden and former Head of Secretariat of The Independent Panel

Dr Raj Panjabi, Former White House Senior Director for Global Health Security and Biodefense, and Advisor to The Independent Panel

Ms Joy Phumaphi, Former Minister of Health of Botswana and Co-Chair of the GPMB

Dr Maha El Rabbat, Former Minister of Health and Population of Egypt and Member of the GPMB

Dr Jorge Saavedra, Executive Director, AHF Global Public Health Institute and Member of the PGPHC

Dr Nina Schwalbe, Founder and Principal, Spark Street Advisors

Dame Barbara M. Stocking, Former President, Murray Edwards College, University of Cambridge and Chair of the PGPHC

Dr Matthew Stone, Former Deputy Director-General at the World Organisation for Animal Health and Member of the GPMB

Ms Eloise Todd, Executive Director & Co-Founder of Pandemic Action Network