



“The Political Declaration on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response must deliver on the promise of working together to prevent another Pandemic,” say World Leaders, and scientists.”

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NEW YORK / VIENNA – Ahead of the High-Level Meeting on the UN General Assembly Political Declaration on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response, several governments met during a *high – level side event* organized by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil society organizations to build on the intentions of the political declaration, discuss what it will take to realize its promises into action and what governments will need to succeed in preventing future pandemics.

The Political Declaration in its final form calls for Member States to follow a One Health approach when it comes to pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. It also refers to the One Health Joint Plan of Action developed by the Quadripartite agencies, which includes the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Organization for Animal Health. In fact, the political declaration highlights the need to address the so-called “drivers of outbreaks in animals” and “comprehensively addressing outbreaks in animals”, as well as the need to strengthen the collaboration among the Quadripartite institutions for a more coherent and consistent global health policy across the human-animal-environment interface.

All member states attending reiterated their support to One Health as well as their commitment to advocate for funding national plans on one health within the Pandemic Fund. Governments stated the importance of working together to ensure that a One Health approach to pandemic prevention is captured and supported in the pandemic instrument.

Quotes from speakers:

Aurélien Rousseau, Minister of Health and Prevention, France

" With an estimated 60% of known infectious diseases and up to 75% of new or emerging infectious diseases originating in animals, preventing dangerous pathogens from jumping from animals to humans is crucial. No pandemic prevention can be effective without addressing the interdependence between the health of people, animals, and ecosystems. This is the reason why France is a strong advocate of the One health approach. "

Ingvild Kjerkol, Minister of Health and Care Services, Norway

“Diseases such as highly pathogenic avian influenza remind us of the importance of the interactions between the environment, animals and people. The next big threat to human health may well develop in animals. Antimicrobial resistance is another good reason why the OneHealth approach is important.

This approach must be integrated in the new pandemic agreement. We also look forward to next year's high level meeting on AMR."

Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada

"Canada values the One Health approach that recognizes the intersection between human, animal and environmental health and promotes collaboration across sectors and borders. We are committed to civic engagement and empowerment because we have seen firsthand the relationship between community resilience and the ability to adapt, reduce harm, and respond to evolving health challenges. As we put our support of this declaration into action, Canada will continue to work collaboratively with local, regional, national and international partners to prevent, prepare for and respond to emerging and re-emerging threats."

Dr. Prastuti Soewondo, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Health, Republic of Indonesia

"Indonesia is committed to a comprehensive approach to PPPR that not only includes vital work to strengthen laboratory capacity, build the health workforce, and strengthen primary healthcare across the country, but also to address the animal health and ecological health drivers of spillover of viruses. Prevention of pandemics before they begin is the most equitable approach to addressing pandemic risk since it protects everyone everywhere equally. Indonesia very much welcomes the inclusion of language promoting One Health and addressing the underlying drivers of pandemics in the Political Declaration."

Mr. Stefano Todde, Coordinator of Projects for the Ministry of Health, Dominican Republic

"In this defining moment at the High Level Meeting, it is imperative to emphasize the paramount importance of placing the "One Health" approach at the very heart of our global health agenda. We find ourselves at a crossroads where we must reevaluate and redefine our vision of health. It is imperative that we acknowledge the intricate interdependence of human, animal, and environmental health. We must advocate fervently for the explicit inclusion of animal and environmental health within the foundational pillars of human well-being. We should update our definition of health, to include animal and environmental health. In our quest to bridge the disparities between nations, especially those that exist between the Global South and North, I stress the urgency of channeling international funding directly into "One Health" initiatives. This strategic allocation of resources empowers nations to construct resilient health systems capable of addressing health challenges from a holistic standpoint. Embracing "One Health" transcends the realm of pandemic prevention; it encapsulates our collective commitment to long-term sustainability, the assurance of global food security, and the safeguarding of our planet's precious ecosystems."

Nina Jamal, pandemics expert at FOUR PAWS, the global animal welfare organization, said: "the Political Declaration sends a clear signal that governments are willing to work together not only to prepare and respond to a future pandemic but more importantly to prevent it via a holistic One Health approach and by tackling the drivers of outbreaks including in animals." However, she adds: "it is of utmost importance that this intention translates into clear steps and action, especially within the WHO negotiations on an international instrument to prepare, prevent and respond to future pandemics. The next step will need to be an international pandemic instrument that incentivizes and supports effective preventive measures, compliance, and implementation."

Zeev Noga, Secretary General of PREZODE, a Doctor in Veterinary Medicine, emphasized that the Political Declaration must integrate ambitious strategies, including adequate funding, recalling that prevention costs 100 times less than cure. “Action on the ground must include identifying and addressing high-risk practices that increase zoonotic outbreaks and spillover events. This is a prerequisite to effectively prevent pandemics.”

Dr. Nigel Sizer, Executive Director of Preventing Pandemics at the Source, a coalition of 20 global public health, environmental, health rights, and Indigenous Peoples Rights organizations, stated, “The Political Declaration gives a nod to addressing the deeper causes of the dramatic rise in new infectious diseases. The next step is for member states to develop comprehensive, meaningful commitments with concrete next steps to make sure that the 25 million deaths and trillions of dollars in economic harm from COVID 19 are learned from. The peak of the crisis is over but we have yet to tackle what has driven this crisis and can trigger future pandemics. Governments, UN agencies and multilateral funding bodies have a clear road map on what is needed to prevent future pandemics - protect forests and wildlife, improve keeping and breeding conditions in animal agriculture, and advance primary healthcare for all, especially in rural communities. Will they decide in favor of humanity?”

Neil Vora MD from Conservation International and The Lancet/PPATS Commission on Prevention of Viral Spillover “I am thrilled that this High-Level Summit will draw attention to the undeniable threats posed by pandemics. This Summit is only a start. The horrors we recently experienced from COVID are a result of underinvestment in pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. We cannot afford for the lessons we learned to be forgotten. I hope that world leaders will make firm commitments to more comprehensively address pandemics in follow-up to the Summit.”

As of 2021, the World Health Organization was tasked by Member States to support the preparation of an international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. The Accord is expected to be concluded by May 2024.

At the side event, World Leaders, diplomats, the scientific community, and civil society agreed that it is necessary to have a multidisciplinary approach to effectively prevent, prepare, and respond to future pandemics. There is a long road ahead of us, but the Political Declaration on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response is a foundation for a meaningful change in global health policy.