

73rd World Health Assembly: UK statement to Committee A

The UK greatly values the World Health Organisation and the crucial leadership role it plays at this difficult time.

To reflect this support our Prime Minister announced at UNGA that the UK will be contributing £340 million in core voluntary contributions over the next 4 years. Of which 30% will be conditional on WHO's delivery of the reforms needed to strengthen its essential global coordination role, including on pandemic preparedness and response.

The UK's increase in flexible funding therefore reflects our belief that WHO should have the funds required to be the modern, agile and inclusive organisation that we need it to be, and reflects that we recognise there is more to be done to achieve this.

We also recognise WHO's leadership in establishing the Emergencies Programme in its current form, following reforms in 2016, which have allowed them to lead swift responses to an increasing number of crises.

As Member States, we now have a unique opportunity to build on this success and, through our current collective focus, accelerate further reform. We have all learned lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic about how we might strengthen national and global capabilities. This also applies to WHO. The IOAC's report is timely. While it rightfully recognises WHO's leadership on COVID-19, its examples demonstrate that there is yet more to do if WHO's emergencies programme is to be fit for the challenges we face in 2020 and beyond. We stand ready to roll up our sleeves and work with you.

The outcomes of the IPPR, IHR and IOAC reviews are therefore crucial in setting the direction that we will collectively follow to achieve these aims and we look forward to concrete recommendations on – the Intermediate Public Health Alert, significantly improving IHR compliance, sustainable organisational funding, expanded surveillance of zoonoses and greater coordinated action at the animal-human health interface through a stronger role for WHO within the tripartite.

We welcome the circulation of the source of the virus terms of reference. The UK has been clear that having this shared understanding of the origins of this virus is key to improving our response to it. And therefore, that this investigation should be prioritised and we expect the investigation and its outcomes to be grounded in robust science.

In addition, effective vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics are central to the global response. The UK is strongly committed to ensuring equitable access to vaccines, including for the poorest countries. The UK support for COVAX includes a contribution of up to £571 million of which £500 million will directly support vaccines for developing countries, and we encourage

others who have not yet done so, to step up their support.

Thank you