

G20 Finance and Health Ministers – statement on COVID-19 response: 17 September 2020

News story

G20 Finance and Health Ministers made a statement on the COVID-19 response after a virtual meeting.



1. Our urgent collective priority is to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and alleviate its health, social and economic impacts. We continue to act upon our Leaders' commitments made at their extraordinary summit on 26 March 2020, and the progress achieved since. We will continue to use all available policy tools to safeguard people's lives, jobs and incomes, support the global economic recovery, and enhance the resilience of health and financial systems, while safeguarding against downside risks.
2. We recognize the positive impact of investment in health system strengthening on economic resilience and growth, both in overcoming the current crisis and in the long term. We remain committed to investing in an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic to bring the spread of the virus under control and prevent further transmission; thereby minimizing the economic and social disruption while reinforcing our support for returning to strong, sustainable, balanced, and inclusive growth.
3. We have mobilized resources to address the financing needs in global health to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and encourage joint efforts including further voluntary contributions to relevant initiatives, organizations and financing platforms. We emphasize the need for a global response and the importance of taking forward our collective action to accelerate the research, development, manufacturing and distribution of COVID-19 diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines, including through the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A)

initiative and its COVAX facility and voluntary licensing of intellectual property, with the aim of supporting equitable and affordable access for all, which is key to overcoming the pandemic and supporting global economic recovery. Further actions are needed to meet the financing needs. We ask the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) to swiftly consider ways to strengthen the financial support for countries' access to COVID-19 tools. We recognize the role of extensive immunization against COVID-19 as a global public good for health in preventing, containing and stopping transmission.

4. We continue to take collective action as a part of the G20 Action Plan – Supporting the Global Economy through the COVID-19 Pandemic. We reiterate our commitment to respond promptly to the evolving health and socio-economic situations and drive forward international economic cooperation as we navigate this crisis and look ahead to a strong, sustained, balanced and inclusive global economic recovery. We will reflect the outcomes of today's meeting in the updated G20 Action Plan that will be presented at the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' meeting in October 2020 and to the G20 Leaders' Summit in November 2020. We call on International Organisations (IOs), notably IMF and OECD, to continue to integrate available pandemic data in elaborating different scenarios as for the economic impact of the health crisis going forward.
5. We take note of the assessment of gaps in pandemic preparedness that the World Health Organization (WHO) undertook in cooperation with relevant international organizations as requested by G20 Leaders in March 2020. We look forward to the work of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPR) on evaluating the international health response to the COVID-19 pandemic as outlined in the World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolution on COVID-19. We acknowledge the important role of the United Nations' system and agencies, including the WHO, while considering the ongoing evaluations and the need to strengthen its overall effectiveness, in coordinating and supporting the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the central efforts of Member States therein, as outlined in the World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolution on COVID-19. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to strengthen health systems and has shown vulnerabilities in the international community's ability to prevent, detect and respond effectively to pandemic threats. This reinforces the need to deliver on commitments to strengthen health systems, particularly enhancing preparedness, prevention, detection and response capacities.
6. We will intensify our efforts to support pandemic surveillance and epidemic intelligence, strengthen health system capabilities, and support platforms to accelerate research and development, to proactively identify and address new and reemerging infectious pathogens. We reaffirm our commitment to full compliance with the International Health

Regulations (IHR 2005), to improve their implementation and to the continued sharing of timely, transparent and standardized data and information including on health measures and the effectiveness of non-pharmaceutical interventions. We encourage innovative ways of capturing and sharing user- and decision-friendly information.

7. We re-emphasize the importance of well-functioning, value-based, inclusive and resilient health systems that can sustain equitable and affordable access to essential and quality health services for all, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable. We reemphasize our commitment to the G20 Shared Understanding on the Importance of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Financing in Developing Countries to improve the resilience, prevention, detection, preparedness and response of health systems through protecting and investing in public health. We recall our commitment to move towards achieving UHC and the important role of countries' following their own paths in line with national contexts and priorities to UHC. We will continue to address the disproportionate economic and social impact of the crisis on women, young people and the most vulnerable segments of society.

8. Although current measures are critical, major gaps still exist in global pandemic preparedness and response. Therefore, we will work together to lay the foundation for targeted actions to help respond to the most immediate challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that the world is better prepared to curb the impact of future health-related crises in line with the One Health Approach. This includes delivering on previous G20 commitments to tackle antimicrobial resistance. We will integrate the economic risks of pandemics, drug resistant infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and high-impact tail risks more systematically into the G20's global risk monitoring and preparedness. We will, with the support of relevant IOs, build on key findings, lessons learned and propose recommendations to address existing gaps in global pandemic preparedness and response ahead of the G20 Leaders' Summit in November 2020.

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