

Report of the meeting

1. The seventh meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response was held from 6 to 10 November and from 4 to 6 December 2023 in a hybrid format, under the leadership of Ms Precious Matsoso of South Africa and Mr Roland Driecé of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as Co-Chairs, with the following Vice-Chairs: Ambassador Tovar da Silva Nunes of Brazil; Mr Ahmed Soliman¹ of Egypt; Ambassador Honsei Kozo of Japan; and Dr Viroj Tangcharoensathien of Thailand. On 10 November 2023, the meeting agreed to elect Ambassador Amr Ramadan of Egypt as the INB Vice-Chair from the Eastern Mediterranean Region to replace Mr Ahmed Soliman of Egypt, expressed appreciation for the work of Mr Soliman and welcomed Ambassador Ramadan as Vice-Chair.
2. In his remarks to the INB on 8 November, the Director-General urged Member States to work to deliver a pandemic agreement and a package of International Health Regulations amendments to the Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly in May 2024. He stated that the International Health Regulations and the pandemic agreement will form the international legal framework for strengthening pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and urged coherence between the INB and Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005). He recognized the challenge many delegations were facing to ensure a balanced agreement amid the torrent of fake news, conspiracy theories, misinformation and disinformation regarding the pandemic agreement. He encouraged delegations to communicate to their citizens that the pandemic agreement will not and cannot cede sovereignty to WHO. The Director-General urged delegations to work with urgency to deliver the pandemic agreement, which will be a generational agreement.
3. In line with previous practice and the promotion of transparency in the work of the INB, agenda items 1 (Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda and programme of work), the open session on agenda item 2 (Consideration and negotiation of the WHO convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response: Proposal for negotiating text of the WHO pandemic agreement), item 5 (Report of the meeting) and item 6 (Closure of the session) were webcast, while the drafting group sessions on item 2 (Consideration and negotiation of the WHO convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response: Proposal for negotiating text of the WHO pandemic agreement), item 3 (Next steps), and item 4 (Proposals from Member States of entities to be included in Annex D and/or Annex E of document A/INB/6/6) were held in closed sessions.

¹ Replaced by Ambassador Amr Ramadan in the meeting of 4–6 December 2023.

4. With respect to item 2 relating to the proposal for negotiating text (document A/INB/7/3), on 10 November 2023, in order to progress the work of the drafting group, the meeting established four drafting subgroups as follows:

- A subgroup to consider Articles 4, 5 and 6 of the proposal for negotiating text, chaired by Ambassador Honsei Kozo and co-facilitated by India, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania.
- A subgroup to consider Articles 10, 11 and possibly 13 of the proposal for negotiating text, chaired by Ambassador Amr Ramadan and co-facilitated by Indonesia, the Philippines and the United States of America.
- A subgroup to consider Article 12 of the proposal for negotiating text, chaired by Dr Viroj Tangcharoensathien and co-facilitated by Australia, Ethiopia and Norway.
- A subgroup to consider Articles 19 and 20 of the proposal for negotiating text, chaired by Ambassador Tovar da Silva Nunes and co-facilitated by Canada, Malaysia and South Africa.

5. The drafting subgroups held intersessional meetings in November and early December, including on 4 December 2023. The drafting group completed a review of the proposal for negotiating text and the meeting discussed next steps, including steps in preparation for the eighth meeting of the INB, scheduled to be held from 19 February to 1 March 2024.

6. The INB requested the Bureau Vice-Chairs and the subgroup co-facilitators to continue holding informal discussions with Member States, with a view to producing text of their respective subgroup's Article(s), preferably by 15 January 2024 but in any event in advance of the eighth meeting of the INB, for the consideration of the INB at its eighth meeting, on the continued understanding that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.

7. The INB requested the Bureau to look into the possibility of holding informal briefings, on financing mechanisms covering Articles 19 and 20 of the negotiating text; on prevention and One Health covering Articles 4, 5 and 6 of the negotiating text; and on Articles 10, 11 and 13 as well as Article 12, with the participation of relevant stakeholders and experts as appropriate and in line with the agreed modalities of the INB.

8. Further, the Bureau will hold an informal interactive briefing session with relevant stakeholders, details of which will be communicated in due course.

9. With respect to the Articles in the proposal for negotiating text which are not presently under consideration by subgroups (as listed above), the Bureau was requested to provide further refined textual proposals, as appropriate, for those Articles on which, in the view of the Bureau, progress will be best made during the period leading up to the eighth meeting of the INB. Such refined textual proposals will take into consideration input received from the drafting group to date, as appropriate. The Bureau encouraged drafting group members to volunteer to support this process. All textual proposals emerging from these processes will be shared through the Bureau and the Secretariat with the drafting group members in advance of the eighth meeting of the INB.

10. The INB agreed to a proposal from a Member State for an additional relevant stakeholder to be included in Annex E of document A/INB/6/6 on the understanding that the document continues to be a living document.

11. It was noted that the ninth meeting of the INB would be held from 18 to 28 March 2024 taking into consideration the holiday on 29 March 2024. The meeting considered and approved its report, and the Co-Chairs closed the session.

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