

PLATFORM FOR ACT-A CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Second Global COVID-19 Summit co-hosted by United States as first COVID Summit Chair, Belize, as CARICOM Chair; Germany, holding the G7 Presidency; Indonesia, holding the G20 Presidency; and Senegal as African Union Chair on 12 May 2022

The Second Global COVID-19 Summit, aimed at redoubling collective efforts to end the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future health threats, will build on the themes and commitments made at the first Summit and will place an emphasis on supporting locally-led solutions to both immediate and long-term challenges, including:

- Getting shots into arms;
- Deploying tests and treatments, especially for the highest-risk populations;
- Expanding and protecting the health workforce and minimizing disruptions to routine and essential health services;
- Enhancing access to medical countermeasures, including research and development and scaling and diversifying local and regional manufacturing; and
- Generating sustainable financing for pandemic preparedness, health security, and health systems¹

As civil society and community representatives to the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), we share key priorities to be addressed in the COVID-19 response and future pandemic preparedness and response mechanisms.

Getting shots into arms requires:

- Governments to support the TRIPS waiver by ensuring a transformative approach to intellectual property sharing and knowledge transfer without harmful compromises that further block the Global South's ability to prevent and reduce the spread COVID-19 and deadly variants
- The importance of technology co-creation and eco-systems to be recognised as key priorities
- Governments to efficiently and transparently share vaccine equipment and doses with COVAX and countries in a way the incoming vaccine doses are added to the governmental vaccination calendar with ample time to drive campaigns for uptake, to mobilise personnel and to transfer equipment to hard to reach locations;
- COVAX supply to countries to be predictable including via brokering procurement solutions (rather than donations only)

1. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/04/18/joint-statement-between-the-united-states-belize-germany-indonesia-and-senegal-on-the-announcement-of-the-second-global-covid-19-summit/>

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Deploying tests and treatments, especially for the highest-risk populations requires:

- A test and treat strategy to be adopted at country level including the scale-up of broad community-based, facility, and self-testing with no-cost access to tests and recommended therapeutics
- Addressing upstream structural barriers to test-and-treat including intellectual property and regulatory barriers to expand supplies, lower prices, and ensure equitable distribution, as well as recognising and ensuring that testing infrastructure, including multivalent tests, focused and delivered at community level, are also the backbone of Pandemic Preparedness Surveillance systems.
- Governments committing needed resources to fully fund test and treat
- Readily available and affordable antigen testing, carried out in either decentralized locations or by individuals themselves with test results to be returned timely enough to permit isolation and/or linkage to treatment
- Self-testing to be considered an essential part of countries' post-COVID economic recovery, averting Long COVID and loss of productivity due to illness

Expanding and protecting the health workforce and minimizing disruptions to routine and essential health services requires:

- Governments to finance public health systems (including community led responses and community based responses) and investment in primary and secondary public services and equipment that takes into account local knowledge, capacity and supply
- Robust health systems perspectives within financing and response of COVID-19 and future health emergencies, particularly a focus on supporting health workers and sustaining essential health services
- Governments to address inequalities, including health-related challenges and reaching the most vulnerable with immunisation programmes

Enhancing access to medical countermeasures, including research and development and scaling and diversifying local and regional manufacturing requires:

- The development of drugs to be based on collaboration and open science models that prohibit patenting of molecules, materials and processes and foster data sharing and rapid diversification of the supply base for the most effective treatment options. This approach should also include coordination on clinical trials to generate robust and reliable data. Public funding and incentives for the research and development of new drugs must have conditions attached to it, to ensure private actors commit to transparency rules and access end goals

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- Expedited regulatory procedures to ensure that regulatory barriers are not obstacles to procurement by/ for LMICs, recognising that slow or bottlenecked regulatory EUL procedures by countries/ organizations with less resources can have a major impact on LMIC access to the full range of quality products available and the full benefits of a robust market for health technologies
- Equitable access to medical countermeasures accounting for in-country disparities, particularly for already vulnerable or marginalised communities, such as accounting for inequities posed by gender, income, ethnicity, race, geographic location, and more

Generating sustainable financing for pandemic preparedness, health security, and health systems requires:

- Fully funding the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), prioritising the full funding of all pillars of work including therapeutics, diagnostics, vaccines and strengthened health systems, including community systems, responsible for the delivery of the tools
- Diverse, inclusive, full, and meaningful participation of vulnerable and marginalised communities and civil society to co-create new mechanisms for pandemic preparedness and response
- Equal intellectual partnership of LMICs with formal representation of leaders and experts in financing and governance mechanisms
- Formal representation of civil society and communities in financing and governance mechanisms