

December 9, 2021

The Honorable Anthony Blinken
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

The Honorable Samantha Power
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C. 20523-0016

Secretary Blinken, Secretary Becerra, and Administrator Power:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we would like to thank you and congratulate you on the outcome of the Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies. Ensuring that the World Health Organization is strengthened and reformed to ensure it is fit for purpose in a more interconnected world is a major step, and while the negotiations will take time, we are encouraged that the U.S. has taken a leadership role that is more than just symbolic.

As you know, the parallel negotiation in the WHO Member State Sustainable Financing Working Group (SFWG) is at an important inflection point, and it is imperative that the WHO have the financial capabilities to achieve the ideals set out by the Member States. **We strongly encourage the U.S. to support the goals of the SFWG, as outlined in its 24 November paper, including its goal of increasing the share of assessed contributions to the WHO base budget to 50% by 2029.**

Historically, the U.S. has been the most generous donor to the World Health Organization and the partnership between the WHO and U.S. has been extremely productive. Ending smallpox, eradicating polio, and taking on HIV/AIDS, maternal deaths, and providing lifesaving assistance in humanitarian situations are but a few ways the strong U.S. and the WHO partnership have saved millions of lives around the world. While it is worth applauding the success of voluntary programs where the U.S. has partnered with the WHO, we have seen over the last few years how the organization has been strained by the COVID-19 pandemic, and unfortunately, political and disinformation campaigns against it.

Reports from the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPPR), the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee, for the WHO Health Emergencies Programme (IOAC) and the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB), the Chair of the Independent Expert Oversight and Advisory Committee (IEOAC) and the G20 High Level Independent Panel on Financing the Global Health Commons (HLIP) have all resoundingly and unequivocally recommended WHO's financing to be more transparent and reliable, with fewer earmarks. The world needs a strong, sustainably financed WHO that is not subject to the political influence of

its donors or the whims of funding flows if it is to fulfill its role as the leading technical and normative international body supporting the highest attainable health for all, while protecting from adverse health events like the current pandemic.

From pre-qualification programme to the emergencies programme, the global community would benefit from reliable funding for the WHO from its Member States, which includes increasing the relative proportion of assessed contributions to heavily earmarked voluntary contributions over the coming years. This will also have the effect of more evenly sharing the burden and making the organization a stronger, more capable organization.

We continue to believe a stronger WHO is in the interest of the U.S. government and its people. As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, this interconnected world needs a strong WHO. Success in achieving U.S. global health goals, and the Sustainable Development Goals, depends on it.

Sincerely,

Better World Campaign
CORE Group
FIND
Friends of the Global Fight
Global Health Council
Global Health Technologies Coalition
Management Sciences for Health
Nothing But Nets
ONE
Pandemic Action Network
PATH
RESULTS
Shot@Life
Smile Train
Task Force for Global Health
Treatment Action Group
What To Expect Project
WorldVision

cc:

Office of Management and Budget
Office of Global Affairs, HHS
Bureau of International Organization Affairs, State