

# WELCOME MESSAGES 2022

HIGH PATRONS OF THE WORLD HEALTH SUMMIT



## **A warm welcome to the World Health Summit (WHS) in Berlin!**

The challenges facing global health could hardly be greater. The COVID-19 pandemic is not yet over, its impact continues to be felt all over the world. In July, the WHO had to declare a public health emergency of international concern for the second time in a few years – this time due to the monkeypox virus. Global warming, war and consequently hunger and migration are putting additional pressure on our healthcare systems and healthcare provision.

It is therefore all the more important that this year the WHS is focusing particularly on the complex interdependency between climate change, food systems, digital transformation, peace and global health. And at the same time the WHS is providing the only right response to all these challenges: bringing experts

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from all over the world together to facilitate joint, internationally coordinated action. The fact that this year's WHS is being hosted together with the WHO is therefore an important signal.

The achievements of globally coordinated action are considerable. So far, more than one billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed to 144 countries via the *ACT-Accelerator*. The WHO's mRNA hub has supported African countries with knowhow and technology to produce mRNA vaccines locally.

As challenging as the present is, we can now set our sights on the future thanks to effective vaccines, new treatments and the two and a half years of experience we now have in dealing with the pandemic. For me, that means first and foremost ensuring that our global health architecture is better equipped for the future. We want to do what we can to achieve this with the *G7 Pact for Pandemic Readiness*, adopted under the German G7 Presidency. It is also important that we share data swiftly and reliably and make it available for research – on the basis of international stand-

ards, not least with regard to data protection. We have a good starting point for this here in Berlin with the WHO *Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence*.

When I write "we", I am, of course, not only referring to governments but also to experts like you – from the health sector, from the areas of development cooperation, research, civil society and business. The *One Health* approach requires even closer interdisciplinary and international cooperation.

Forums such as the WHS are and remain indispensable. For they ensure that critical debate can take place which provides space for different perspectives and allows free academic exchange at the highest level, thereby laying the foundation for knowledge-based and rational policymaking. The importance of this has also been revealed by the pandemic, during which huge doubt was cast on scientific findings in some quarters or they became the focus of targeted misinformation campaigns.

Academic exchange and combined expertise can help to counter this. Both are needed in the search for

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innovative solutions that can make our healthcare systems fit for the future. And both are embodied in the WHS and in you as participants.

I hope you have a successful and fruitful time here at the WHS in Berlin!



**Olaf Scholz**  
Chancellor of the  
Federal Republic of Germany



**Where science, politics, the private sector and civil society meet for inspiring talks, enhanced cooperations and new solutions.**

A new edition of the World Health Summit brings us together this year, under an innovative partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO). I am delighted to be a Patron alongside Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not yet over as we are still battling the virus around the world. This global health crisis created a shockwave, as cases and deaths rose by the day, and as each new variant of concern tested our health systems and our determination; but it also generated a momentum for us to come together, unprecedented in the history of nations, united around one common goal: to end the pandemic while developing more equitable and sus-

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tainable models – to ensure each and all are safe.

It is in that spirit that France, along with the European Commission, the WHO and many other partners, launched the “Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator” in April 2020, to support the development, production and equitable distribution through health systems of safe and effective COVID-19 diagnostics, treatments and vaccines. By bringing together Governments, international organizations, private actors and civil society, ACT-A has largely delivered on its promise of equity and will continue to do so in 2023.

The European Union has played a leading role in this exceptional call for international solidarity: acting as one Team Europe, the European Commission and its Member States are a major contributor to ACT-A and its “vaccine pillar”, COVAX, and one of the main donors of COVID-19 vaccines, with a collective commitment of 700 million doses. At the European Union – African Union Summit last February, under the French Presidency of the European Union Council, Team Europe also committed to a range of initiatives aiming at strengthening local pro-

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duction capacities; supporting the COVID-19 vaccination campaigns' rollout; fostering collaboration and exchanges of best practices to strengthen pharmaceutical systems; and spreading the One Health co-operation.

Beyond the end of the current crisis, health issues must remain on top of the international political agenda and France will continue to play an active role and ensure that health does not take second place to the crises that are unfortunately accumulating: wars, food and energy crises, the growing monkeypox epidemic, and so on. We will be doing so first by updating our European strategy for global health, a decision adopted under the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. This renewed strategy will contribute to the construction of the "European Union of Public Health", to confirm the EU as a leading actor of global health and to promote our shared values of solidarity, equity and the right to health for all, in a meaningful and impactful way.

France is reflecting on its own future strategy for global health, and among our priorities for the global health agenda comes the need to sustain-

ably strengthen health systems, and collective pandemic prevention, preparedness and response systems and capacities, at all levels – global, regional and national. France is determined to engage its partners in adopting a solid international treaty on pandemics. We have no choice but learn from the current crisis and be better equipped for the next pandemic. This is our responsibility as leaders. In order to do better, we must understand better and rely on scientific work. That is what the WHS is all about!

One of the major lessons from COVID-19 is the need to consider human, animal and environmental health as fundamentally interrelated. Climate change as well as the loss of biodiversity, both caused by human activity, are clearly affecting our ecosystems' balance and our health. With that One Health approach in mind, France along with Germany and the Quadripartite collaboration (WHO, OIE, FAO and UNEP) will continue to support the crucial work of the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP).

The science-based evidence and multidisciplinary One Health approach will provide us the guidance

needed to enhance our health systems' resilience against future shocks. Integration into regional partnerships and networks, and collaboration between them, added to investments into the strengthening of local production capacities and the training of sufficient and qualified human resources for health will be necessary and complementary steps to long-term strengthening of health systems. France is a long-standing advocate of this vision, motivating its strong support the WHO Academy, from its inception.

This year, as armed conflicts in Ukraine, in Syria, in Yemen, in Ethiopia and in many other parts of the world are raging, we must uphold health as a fundamental human right for all, even in contexts of armed violence and repression. France will continue to support access to health care and services, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls – now more than ever as they are under attack – and access to sufficient and nutritious food, including for refugees, internally displaced people and other vulnerable groups.

We must now make the right decisions. New, ambitious and sustain-

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able perspectives are emerging under the aegis of the WHO and its Director-General, of the European Union and its Member States. Together, we must give our support to an improved and renewed, balanced and efficient multilateral system and architecture allowing a better management of pandemics and consequently a better protection of our populations. France will be there.

Together, let us rise to the global health challenges that are in front of us and implement the fundamental right to health for all.

I wish you all a successful Summit.



**Emmanuel Macron**  
President of the  
Republic of France



I am proud to continue to be a patron of the World Health Summit alongside Chancellor Olaf Scholz and President Emmanuel Macron. WHO is honoured to join the Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin and the World Health Summit as a co-organizer this year.

The world is at a critical juncture. The COVID-19 pandemic is not over, but the end is in sight. We face a great risk that the world moves on to the next crisis - of which there are plenty - and forgets the painful and costly lessons the pandemic has taught us. One of the most obvious of those is that when health is at risk, everything is at risk. The pandemic has been much more than a health crisis; it has affected societies, businesses, economies, schools and politics. Health is therefore central to development, and to social, economic and political stability.

This year's World Health Summit addresses the five priorities for global

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health that I outlined for countries and for WHO at this year's World Health Assembly, as together we recover, rebuild and renew our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The first is **promoting health**, by making an urgent paradigm shift to addressing the root causes of disease and creating the social, economic and environmental conditions in which health can thrive. Making this shift begins with recognising that health starts not in the clinic or the hospital, but in schools, streets, supermarkets, households and cities. Much of the work that Ministries of Health do is dealing with the consequences of poor diets, polluted environments, unsafe roads and workplaces, inadequate health literacy, and the aggressive marketing of products that harm health, and the existential threat of climate change. Such a shift could cut the global disease burden in half, but it would also offer massive economic gains, by reducing the burden on health systems and increasing the productivity of populations.

The second priority is **providing health**, by reorienting health systems towards primary health care as the foundation of both universal health

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coverage and health system resilience. The pandemic has demonstrated that a resilient health system is not the same thing as an advanced medical care system. Some countries with the most sophisticated medical care were overwhelmed by COVID-19. By contrast, some middle-income countries with fewer resources fared much better, thanks to investments in public health after outbreaks of SARS, MERS, H1N1 and others. The backbone of public health is robust primary health care, for detecting outbreaks at the earliest possible stage, as well as for preventing disease and promoting health at the community level.

The third priority is **protecting health**, by strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience. The pandemic has exposed serious vulnerabilities in the world's defences against epidemics and pandemics, while the collective failure to address neglected diseases in neglected communities puts us all at risk. In May, WHO published a White Paper with 10 key proposals for making the world safer, in the areas of governance, financing and systems and tools, under the umbrella of a new legally-binding international instrument on pandemic preparedness

and response, which WHO's Member States are now negotiating.

The fourth priority is **powering health** through science, research, innovation, data, and digital technologies. Advances in science and research are constantly pushing back the boundaries of the unknown and the impossible; innovations in health products and service delivery give us hope of overcoming challenges that once seemed insurmountable; developments in big data and machine learning are helping us to see who is being left behind, and to track progress against our targets; and digital technologies offer huge potential for delivering health services in new ways, to more people, especially in hard-to-reach areas. At the same time, one of the lessons of this pandemic is that the fruits of science and technology must be shared equitably.

The fifth priority is **performing for health**, by building a stronger, empowered and sustainably financed WHO. At this year's World Health Assembly, our Member States made a historic decision to increase assessed contributions (the membership dues countries pay) to 50% of WHO's base budget over the next decade. This will give WHO the fle-

xibility and predictability to plan for long-term programming in countries, and to attract and retain the people we need to deliver those programmes. Of course, it is incumbent on us to return the trust our Member States have put in us with strong governance, accountability, transparency and efficiency. Even before the pandemic, we had already made major progress in these areas, and we are committed to further improvements. In particular, our focus in the coming years is to significantly strengthen our country offices to support greater country capacity and greater country ownership.

The world must heed the lessons of this pandemic. One of the most important of those is the power of hope: that with science, solidarity and a commitment to equity, we can avoid unnecessary deaths and illness, and create stronger, more equitable and resilient health systems and societies that are able to deal with the crises of the future.



**Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**  
Director-General of the  
World Health Organization (WHO)