

Written Contribution to INB Public Hearings

Submitted for Barbara Stocking, Panel for a Global Public Health Convention

A convention ensuring the right systems in place, and swift, coordinated response, may have prevented the pandemic we have been enduring.

It must start with four non-negotiable principles:

- Solidarity – because we are all in this together. Solidarity is in our own self-interest.
- Equity – there must be equal access to tests, vaccines and treatments, as well as processes where all countries are included in decision-making.
- Transparency – we can only stop outbreaks and manage pandemics if countries share all they know throughout, and especially at the outset.
- Accountability – lack of accountability of countries was the fundamental reason we are in such disarray.

What do we need to be accountable for? Preparedness includes accurate public health surveillance, and readiness to act when alerted by WHO, requiring finance for poorer countries. Preparedness would be cross-government, not only health. Because countries are at different stages of preparedness, we suggest countries develop five-year plans, independently assessed by a Monitoring and Assessment Body (Body) mandated by the Convention, but at arms- length from WHO.

The time of detection, alert and immediate response most critically needs assessment. WHO would have authority to give rapid, pragmatic evidence-based advice. The Body we envisage will importantly assess countries at these times, requiring action and to be public in its findings.

It is in countries' own interests to comply with guidance providing mutual assurance to each other.

Because we are still at high risk of new pandemics, we must act fast to be ready. Read about the Pandemic Convention We Need Now: <https://gphcpanel.org/the-pandemic-convention-we-need-now/>