

April 28, 2023

H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida
Prime Minister of Japan

Dear H.E. Mr. Kishida,

We would first like to express our sincere appreciation for your leadership in global health and promoting global efforts to achieve UHC. Your commentary published in the Lancet, “Human security and universal health coverage: Japan’s vision for the G7 Hiroshima Summit,” has encouraged all of us in the global health community. We have high expectations for Japan’s leadership in the discussions at the upcoming G7 Hiroshima Summit and related meetings in May.

The Hiroshima G7 Global Health Task Force (GHTF) was formed last July by the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) via an inclusive process, engaging various stakeholders from the Global South and North. As international advisors of the GHTF, we have provided recommendations on how Japan can lead the G7 discussions on global health. It is opportune that the UN High-Level Meetings on UHC, pandemic preparedness & response (PPR), and tuberculosis will all be held in September this year. Japan has been a champion of UHC, has deep expertise on tuberculosis, and has the G7 presidency in this critical year for PPR. We therefore look to your decisive leadership, as President of the G7 Summit, to continue driving international efforts in all three areas to strengthen the global health system, including preventing future pandemics by advancing health systems resilience toward UHC.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is being brought under control, the risk of future outbreaks remains high. More than 200 emerging infectious diseases (EIDs), of which 75% are zoonoses, have been reported since 1970. In the last 20 years alone, we have seen an influx of EIDs, including SARS, H1N1, MERS, Ebola virus disease, Zika virus disease, COVID-19, and mpox. Recently, cases of dengue fever have been reported in Tokyo as habitats for mosquitos that carry the virus have expanded due to climate change.

Informed by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past three years, 2023 is an extremely critical year to set the direction for a global system that can respond effectively to future health emergencies. Our experience with COVID-19 proved that measures and technological capabilities to fight ongoing infectious diseases and syndromes that Japan has long supported under the umbrella of UHC, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), and antimicrobial resistance, have been fundamental in dealing with EIDs.

In addition, we must promote global collaboration including a strengthened and interconnected global health emergency workforce, and joint R&D efforts that cut across individual infectious diseases to enable robust, early, and highly coordinated responses to health emergencies, and ensure a comprehensive approach to advance timely and equitable access to medical countermeasures (MCM) within 100 days of an epidemic or pandemic threat being identified. It is important to strengthen PPR by promoting measures against ongoing infectious diseases, while establishing a health and community system where all can receive quality and lifelong medical and preventive services, safely and without financial hardships. Japan, as a global leader in natural disaster prevention efforts, can lead on institutionalizing and strengthening health systems to prevent the next health crisis.

Enclosed is our recommendations to the G7, based on GHTF's collective input. We, the members of the international advisory group to the Hiroshima G7 Global Health Task Force, would like to give our fullest support to Japan's Presidency as it fulfills and implements the G7 commitments throughout this year. JCIE, as Secretariat of the task force, is preparing to organize an international conference in collaboration with a diverse set of stakeholders towards the end of 2023 to review the progress of these commitments to PPR and resilient health systems, identify concrete steps to facilitate their implementation by partners, and take stock of the remaining initiatives to be handed over to the 2024 G7 Presidency.

To ensure the conference supports the priorities of the G7 effectively, we would like to seek the endorsement of the Government of Japan for this follow-up initiative, which will provide continuity to Japan's global health agenda, and help cement Japan's legacy and international leadership through realizing its vision for UHC and human security.

We appreciate your leadership in global health, and hope that your commitment will become the basis for collective action among all stakeholders to make the world more resilient to future pandemics.

cc: H.E. Mr. Yoshimasa Hayashi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Japan

H.E. Mr. Shunichi Suzuki, Minister of Finance, Japan

H.E. Mr. Katsunobu Kato, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan

Endorsed by the following Hiroshima G7 Global Health Task Force International Advisors:

Lav Agarwal, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India

Manica Balasegaram, Executive Director, Global Antibiotic Research & Development Partnership (GARDP)

Seth Berkley, CEO, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

Joe Cerrell, Managing Director for Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia (EMEEA), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Minister of State to the President of the Republic of Senegal

Thomas B. Cueni, Director General, International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Association (IFPMA)

Mandeep Dhaliwal, Director, HIV, Health and Development Group, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Alan Donnelly, Convenor, G20 Health & Development Partnership

Philippe Duneton, Executive Director, Unitaid

Mark Dybul, Faculty Co-Director, Center for Global Health and Quality, and Professor, Department of Medicine, Georgetown University Medical Center

Victor Dzau, President, National Academy of Medicine (NAM), USA

Jeremy Farrar, Ex-Director, Wellcome Trust

Philippe Fauchet, Founder, Mirasense Partners; former Chairman, GlaxoSmithKline K.K.

Richard Hatchett, CEO, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)

Richard Horton, Editor-in-Chief, the Lancet

Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Justin Koonin, Co-Chair, Steering Committee, UHC2030

Iлона Kickbusch, Founder, Global Health Centre at Graduate Institute of International & Development Studies in Geneva

Steven Lauwerier, Acting Director of Health, Programme Group, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Rosemary Mburu, Executive Director, WACi Health, Kenya

Khuat Thi Hai Oanh, Executive Director, Center for Supporting Community Development Initiatives, Vietnam

Francis Gervase Omaswa, Executive Director, African Centre for Global Health and Social Transformation; Laureate of the Third Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize for Medical Services

Peter Piot, Handa Professor of Global Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; Special Advisor on COVID-19 to the President, EU Chief Scientific Advisor Epidemics, Cabinet of Ursula Von Der Leyen, President of the European Commission

Michael R. Reich, Takemi Professor of International Health Policy, Emeritus, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Peter Sands, Executive Director, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Diah Satyani Saminarsih, Founder and CEO, Center for Indonesia's Strategic Development Initiatives (CISDI); Former Senior Advisor on Gender and Youth to WHO Director General

Patrick Vallance, Chair, Steering Group, Independent Pandemic Preparedness Secretariat

Walaiporn Patcharanarumol, Director, Global Health Division, Ministry of Public Health; Secretary General, IHPP Foundation

Robert Yates, Director, Global Health Programme; Executive Director, Centre for Universal Health, Chatham House