

MIKTA STATEMENT ON COVID-19
during the 74th World Health Assembly
25 May 2021

We, Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Turkey, and Australia (MIKTA), are deeply saddened by the loss of lives and the ongoing suffering caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This pandemic is one of the most serious global health crises of modern times and has been a powerful reminder of the imperative for strong and responsive global systems in our increasingly interconnected world.

Ensuring timely, global, and equitable access to affordable, safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines for the global public good, so that no one is left behind, is of the highest priority for MIKTA, and is an important pathway to saving lives, reopening economies, and restoring stability.

We recognise, among other initiatives, the fundamental role of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator and its COVAX Facility, including the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment which serves as one of the main multilateral mechanisms to ensure fair access and equitable global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, in particular for low- and middle-income economies. These initiatives have advanced challenging and complex research and development at great pace and contributed to scaling up manufacturing. These efforts have been one of the key foundations of international response to COVID-19.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to working with the World Health Organization and the broader multilateral system in supporting the global response to the pandemic. We also convey our deep gratitude for the extraordinary dedication of front-line health workers in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic – particularly in this, the International Year of Health and Care Workers.

MIKTA's highest priority going forwards is to ensure our multilateral institutions are fit-for-purpose, effective, transparent, accountable and equipped to respond to global challenges, such as novel disease outbreaks.

Now there is an unparalleled opportunity to strengthen the World Health Organization to achieve its objective, inter alia, to act as the directing and coordinating authority in international health work; to stimulate and advance work to eradicate epidemic, endemic and other diseases; to furnish appropriate technical support and, in emergencies, necessary assistance upon the request or acceptance of governments; and take practical steps to strengthen our collective ability to respond to future health crises.

We welcome the reports from the *Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response* and from the *Review Committee on the Functioning of the International Health Regulations (2005) during the COVID-19 Response* released ahead of the 74th World Health Assembly to reflect on lessons learnt and set in place a fit-for-purpose global architecture for preventing, detecting and responding to global pandemics.

MIKTA countries recognise the importance of an authoritative and responsive World Health Organization, and the need to reduce the risk of future zoonotic disease outbreaks and the threat of anti-microbial resistance through a multi-sector, evidence-based One Health¹ approach. We also underscore the centrality of enhanced implementation of the *International Health Regulations (2005)* by all parties, supported by improved, fair and equitable information sharing, capacity building, technology and knowledge transfer, and transparency between states on mutually agreed terms.

MIKTA countries affirm that all WHO Member States should work together in considering the benefits of developing a new international treaty for pandemic preparedness and response, under the coordination of WHO.

We look forward to seeing strong commitments made at the 74th World Health Assembly. MIKTA countries stand ready to contribute to strengthening the global community's ability to prevent and mitigate future epidemics and pandemics.

¹ [One Health \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int)