

3.3: Public Health Preparedness and Response

Thank you, chair. The Global Health Council, and its members, PATH, GHTC, AAP, and IDSA appreciate this opportunity to comment.

GHC members have decades of experience in preventing, detecting, and responding to outbreaks, and in the development, scale-up, and delivery of lifesaving technologies. We welcome this report, and the Research and Development Blueprint for Action to Prevent Epidemics is an important call to action. We applaud recent progress in strengthening country capacity, including the successful containment of the 2017 Ebola outbreak in the DRC. The global health security roadmap led to improved collaboration among partners and stakeholders, mobilizing supplies and responders including a mobile laboratory for rapid sampling, allowing the Ministry of Health to respond effectively. DRC now has activated an Emergency Operations Center connected across relevant ministries to enable rapid response to public health emergencies such as the recent cholera outbreak. These experiences have shown that infectious disease physicians and scientists are not only central in the response, but also provide vital expertise to policy formulation and system strengthening to achieve IHR compliance. Health professional associations are also a critical voice.

We support efforts by WHO and Member States to promote compliance with the IHRs, and call for concerted global and national action to accelerate pandemic preparedness. We are heartened more than 60 countries have completed JEEs. We urge WHO and Member States to enact the recommendations of the 2017 International Working Group on Financing Preparedness and ensure that every country has a costed, financed National Action Plan by 2019. We urge creation of an independent monitoring and accountability mechanism, further action on the R&D Blueprint, and the robust inclusion of AMR in WHO's health preparedness and response plans. These are critical steps in continuing the political momentum to improve preparedness generated by the 2014–16 Ebola crisis.