

A Pandemic Treaty: What Comes Next

The World Health Assembly resolved to begin formal negotiations



Courtesy: WHO

The World Together: Establishment of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Body

At its Special Session on November 29 - December 1, 2021, the World Health Assembly (WHA) of the WHO launched a formal process to develop an international treaty on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. Here is a summary of the resolution:

A Forum to Negotiate

The WHA created an Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, with a view to adoption under Article 19 or under other provisions of the WHO Constitution. INB membership is open to all WHA members and certain others.

Commencement and Leadership

The INB will first meet before March 1, 2022. It will elect its leadership ensuring there is geographic diversity and a balance of developed and developing countries. The INB will also agree on a timeline and its working methods consistent with principles of inclusiveness, transparency, consensus, member state leadership, and efficiency.

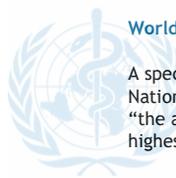
Content Development

The INB will identify the substantive elements of an agreement and then prepare a working draft. This work is to be completed by August 1, 2022. By this time, the INB will also identify whether the instrument should be an Article 19 treaty or another legal vehicle. The INB shall submit a progress report to the WHA at its meeting in May 2023 and a proposal by its meeting in May 2024.

Support from the WHO Secretariat

In addition to providing the INB with facilities support and other services necessary to carry out its functions, the Director-General was requested to hold public hearings to inform deliberations and to facilitate inclusive participation of the global community.

[Click here to read the full resolution](#)



World Health Organization (WHO)

A specialized agency of the United Nations formed in 1948. Its objective is “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health.”

WHO’s Article 19 Treaty Powers

The [WHO’s] Health Assembly shall have authority to adopt conventions or agreements with respect to any matter within the competence of the Organization. A two-thirds vote of the Health Assembly shall be required for the adoption of such conventions or agreements, which shall come into force for each Member when accepted by it in accordance with its constitutional processes.

Resources

[WHA Special Session](#)

[Legal Tools for Pandemic Preparedness - WHO Collaborating Center Support for New Coordinating Mechanisms](#)

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