

Final Report of the Eighth Meeting of the Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance March 6, 2024

Chair of the Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance

Honorable Mia Amor Mottley

Prime Minister of Barbados

GLG member participants: *Dr Ahmed Mohammed Obaid Al Saidi (of Oman); Mr Mohammed Mousa Alameeri (of United Arab Emirates); Ms Beatrice Atim Odwong Anywar (of Uganda); Prof António Correia de Campos (of Portugal); Prof C.O. Onyebuchi Chukwu (of Nigeria); Dr Guilherme Antônio da Costa Júnior (of Brazil); Dr Maggie De Block (of Belgium); Hon Chris Fearne (of Malta); Mr Jakob Forssmed (of Sweden); Dr Jamie Jonker (of USA); Ms Sunita Narain (of India); Mr Yasuhisa Shiozaki (of Japan); Dr Jeffrey Scott Weese (of Canada); Prof Lothar H. Wieler (of Germany).*

GLG member apologies: *Prof Dame Sally Davies (of United Kingdom); Ms Grace Fu (of Singapore); Dr Ernst Kuipers (of The Netherlands); Ms Dechen Wangmo (of Bhutan); and Ms Jennifer Zachary (of USA).*

GLG ex-officio member apologies (delivered video messages): *Dr QU Dongyu (FAO); Ms Inger Andersen (UNEP); Dr Monique Eloit (WOAH); and Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (WHO).*

Invited speakers: H.E Abdulaziz Al Rumaih, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Dr Karen Vincenti (Malta), Mr Michele Cecchini (OECD), Ms Alexandra Cameron (WHO).

Process of the meeting: The eighth official meeting of the [Global Leaders Group](#) (GLG) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) was held virtually by Zoom from 15:00 – 16:30 CET on March 6, 2024. The meeting was chaired by the His Excellency Jakob Forssmed, the Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health of Sweden, on behalf of GLG Chair H.E. Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados who was not able to chair at the last minute due to other pressing priorities. The agenda for the meeting covered: (1) An update from the Secretariat on progress under the GLG action plan, the work of GLG Task Forces, and other GLG initiatives; (2) The Fourth Ministerial Conference on AMR in 2024; (3) A moderated discussion of the draft GLG report including recommendations for consideration by Member States for the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) High-level Meeting (HLM) on AMR; and (4) an introduction to the ninth GLG meeting in Stockholm, Sweden in May 2024.

Opening of the meeting and welcoming remarks: In his opening remarks, Minister Forssmed reiterated the mandate by the General Assembly for the GLG to support the co-facilitators and the Quadripartite organizations in the preparations and conduct of the upcoming UNGA HLM on AMR. He requested that the GLG recommendations be finalized quickly and should stay focused, clear, and action-oriented to ensure that commitments yield tangible actions and results in countries.

The principals of the Quadripartite organizations each shared opening remarks via video messages. Dr QU Dongyu (Director-General of FAO) highlighted AMR's connection to food, feed, the environment and the climate crisis. He noted that FAO has launched the RENOFARM initiative to support more than 100

countries in reducing the need for antimicrobials in agrifood systems and promote best practices. Ms Inger Andersen (Executive Director of UNEP) highlighted the triple planetary crisis and the need to strengthen environmental action in the One Health response to AMR which requires a multisectoral approach that prioritizes the needs of the global South. Dr Monique Eloit (Director-General of WOA) highlighted four key gaps in addressing AMR: prevention, surveillance, multisectoral coordination, and equitable funding for animal health, especially for vaccines. Dr Eloit noted that a forthcoming WOA report will show an increasing trend in antimicrobial consumption in animal health globally, and that the UNGA HLM on AMR will be a critical opportunity for concrete engagements and bold actions in the AMR response. Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (Director-General of WHO) reported that WHO member states have drafted a World Health Assembly resolution on addressing drug resistant bacterial infections in humans, defining strategic priorities including infection prevention, universal access to quality diagnosis and appropriate treatment, and governance and financing. He expressed his support for the draft GLG recommendations. He also thanked Dr Haileyesus Getahun, the departing Director of the Global Coordination and Partnership Department in the AMR Division of WHO and of the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat (QJS) on AMR for his contributions to WHO and the global AMR response.

1. General update from the Secretariat

The GLG shared updates regarding ongoing activities

1.1. Recent work and milestones: Dr Haileyesus Getahun briefly summarized updates regarding the advocacy work of the GLG in advance of the UNGA HLM on AMR; QJS-supported work on the global economic case for AMR investment; and GLG work to help address the pipeline and access crisis. The recent invitation to the GLG to join the G20 Agriculture Working Group was noted as a major milestone.

1.2 Reports on key GLG activities

- Karen Vincenti summarized the iterative process of developing GLG recommendations for consideration by the UNGA through two virtual sessions. The recommendations represent a One Health approach, with technical inputs from Quadripartite organizations and inputs from GLG members. The GLG recommendations include global targets that should be pursued within country-specific contexts.
- Michele Cecchini presented on the final results of the economic case for investing in AMR conducted by the QJS in collaboration with the World Bank and OECD following the request of the GLG in the 3rd GLG meeting in August 2021. The GLG provided direction and regular inputs including through information sessions and at its meeting in June 2023. The GLG noted the findings which will be part of the GLG report.
- Alexandra Cameron discussed GLG work to help address the antibiotic pipeline and access crisis in human health. The GLG has developed six recommendations to address this crisis through a process including interviews with GLG members and other experts, technical sessions and a literature review. The recommendations span a range of mutually reinforcing financial and non-financial solutions, along with concrete actions to address each recommendation, and the [report](#) was published in February 2024.

1.3 Discussion: The Honorable Dr Chris Fearn shared recent updates from New York regarding the process of the UNGA High-Level Meeting on AMR, to take place on September 26, 2024. The modalities of this meeting are still being discussed and are expected to be finalized and adopted by the UNGA by March 21, 2024. Stakeholder meetings are also expected to take place in New York in May to inform the negotiations of the political declaration. He outlined potential risks that may hamper progress towards a successful outcome of the HLM, including current geopolitical issues unrelated to health or AMR.

Overall, GLG members were asked to help ensure that the AMR political declaration has ambition, leads to impact and strengthens accountability, and that ongoing geopolitical differences should not affect it.

GLG members commended the inclusion of the GLG as an international observer in discussions of the G20 Agriculture Working Group under the Brazil G20 Presidency. Professor Guilherme Antonio da Costa noted that AMR targets should be realistic, based on science and relevant to national and regional contexts and support the development of NAPs. GLG members noted that advocacy for the AMR response should be pursued at every opportunity, and that external financing for the AMR response is insufficient to sustainably combat AMR, and domestic financing for AMR through the engagement of politicians is essential. Language used in AMR-related communications should be accessible to people outside the scientific community to maximize impact. GLG members also highlighted the need to expand AMR efforts beyond human health into animal and food health in LMICs.

2. Fourth Ministerial Conference on AMR

Details regarding the upcoming Fourth Ministerial Conference on AMR were shared with the GLG

His Excellency Abdulaziz Al Rumaih, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, invited GLG members to the Fourth High-level Ministerial Conference on AMR, to be held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on November 15-16, 2024, under the title “From declaration to implementation: Accelerating actions through multi-sectoral partnerships for the containment of AMR.” This conference will be a critical opportunity to build on the outcomes and momentum of the September UNGA HLM on AMR. Ministers of environment and agriculture will be included in invitations to the conference to encourage participation of all sectors. A special session for non-governmental stakeholders will also be convened on the day preceding the meeting. H. E. the Vice Minister invited the GLG to contribute to defining the main themes of the conference. More information regarding the conference will be available in the coming weeks.

3. Discussion of GLG report and recommendations

GLG Members provided final inputs on the key recommendations and messages in the draft GLG report

3.1: GLG member inputs:

- It was suggested to include the need for more engagement with regional organizations.
- Strong support was expressed for the proposed independent panel.
- There is a continued need for grassroots explanation of complex scientific topics, and education at youth and university levels should be included in national AMR action plans.
- Concern was expressed about political pushback and lack of urgency around AMR, particularly on the issue of One Health.
- Targets will be key to drive action in the coming months; the target on the elimination of important antimicrobial use in animals is particularly important.
- While the GLG report is right to highlight the importance of animal vaccination, it should not be prioritized above prevention or transformed agricultural systems. Several GLG members proposed the inclusion of a tenth recommendation on prevention, which comprises a range of interventions, including biosecurity and animal husband practices.
- Urgent advocacy is key to socialize the recommendations among member states.
- The political declaration should include the maximum necessary ambitious policy sets and numerical targets.
- Structural changes to UN roles and responsibilities regarding AMR were suggested. In response, Dr Getahun emphasized that the current mandate of the Quadripartite organizations was

reviewed and reinforced by the IACG in 2019 and includes collaboration and engagement with other multilateral and other relevant organizations in the AMR response from each sector.

- To strengthen targets, standardization of the definition of death due to AMR may be required, and LMICs may need technical and financial support to facilitate reporting and surveillance of these deaths.
- Support was expressed for strengthening public health systems, specifically through the analysis of wastewater, given its potential to promote intersectoral collaboration and the precedent of COVID-19.
- It was agreed that a tenth recommendation on prevention should be included in the report.
- The GLG requested that the Secretariat finalize the report based on inputs at the meeting and any additional written comments.

4. Ninth GLG meeting

GLG members were invited to the 9th GLG meeting in May in Sweden

Minister Forssmed invited attendees to the Ninth GLG meeting on May 6-7, 2024 in Sigtuna, Sweden, to continue preparations for the UNGA high-level meeting. He also mentioned that there will be opportunity for GLG members to witness Sweden's initiatives in addressing AMR.

5. Closing

Upon his departure from his position at WHO, GLG members sincerely thanked Dr Haileyesus Getahun for his years of hard work and invaluable contributions to the global AMR response through the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat and in other capacities. The GLG looks forward to seeing the positive impact that he will have as he transitions to facilitating South-to-South partnerships for health and development in his new role as CEO of the Health Development Partnership for Africa and the Caribbean.

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