

Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance October 16, 2024

Chair:

Her Excellency Mia Amor Mottley
Prime Minister of Barbados

GLG member participants: *Hon Chris Fearne (of Malta, Vice Chair); Dr Ahmed Bin Mohammed Bin Obaid Al Saidi (of Oman); Prof António Correia de Campos (of Portugal); Dr Maggie De Block (of Belgium); Dr Guilherme Antônio da Costa Júnior (of Brazil); Prof Dame Sally Davies (of United Kingdom); Mr Jakob Forssmed (of Sweden); Dr Ernst Kuipers (of The Netherlands); Ms Sunita Narain (of India); Mr Yasuhisa Shiozaki (of Japan); Ms Dechen Wangmo (of Bhutan); Dr Jeffrey Scott Weese (of Canada); Prof Lothar H. Wieler (of Germany); Ms Jennifer Zachary (of USA).*

GLG ex-officio member participants: *Ms Inger Andersen (UNEP); Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (WHO); Dr QU Dongyu (FAO); Dr Emmanuelle Soubeyran (WOAH, video remarks)*

Invited speaker: His Excellency Fahd bin Abdulrahman Al-Jalajel, Minister of Health, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Apologies: *Ms Beatrice Atim Odwong Anywar (of Uganda); Ms Grace Fu (of Singapore).*

Absent: *Mr Mohammed Mousa Alameeri (of United Arab Emirates); Prof C.O. Onyebuchi Chukwu (of Nigeria); Dr Jamie Jonker (of USA).*

Process of the meeting: The tenth official meeting of the Global Leaders Group (GLG) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) was held virtually by Zoom on October 16, 2024, from 15:00 – 17:30 CEST. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mia Amor Mottley, and after her departure by Hon. Dr Chris Fearne. The official agenda for the meeting comprised: (1) General update from the Secretariat; (2) Fourth Ministerial Conference on AMR; and (3) Political advocacy post-UNGA high-level meeting on AMR.

Opening remarks by the Chair

The Chair, H.E Prime Minister Mottley, emphasized the excellent high-level meeting (HLM) on AMR at the UN General Assembly in New York on September 26, and thanked all GLG members and the co-facilitators for their efforts. The political declaration is not the end of the road, she noted, but the beginning of the next chapter in the global response to AMR. She identified four immediate priorities: (1) a strong focus on implementation of the declaration's commitments at country level; (2) adequate financing for implementation of national AMR action plans, R&D and to support the Quadripartite; (3) governance, particularly to ensure that the Quadripartite organizations are empowered to support implementation of country-level commitments in the declaration and to fulfil the commitments specifically directed to them; and (4) awareness raising to promote responsible antimicrobial use. She intends to focus on these priorities in her remaining, limited time as Chair. This includes identifying and pursuing opportunities to engage with private sector leaders - especially those in the pharmaceutical, agri-food, and public relations industries - on the topic of public-private collaboration for financing and awareness-raising initiatives related to the AMR response.

Opening remarks by the Quadripartite principals

Dr QU Dongyu of FAO noted that implementing the political declaration requires sustainable financing commitments, such as to the AMR Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), a good example of One Health collaboration,

and urged the GLG to continue its advocacy on financing, including with the G7 and G20. He highlighted the importance of FAO's RENOFARM initiative to reduce antimicrobial use on farms over the next decade and opportunities such as the current World Food Forum to promote more resilient agri-food systems. Dr QU called on all stakeholders to focus on implementation of the commitments in the political declaration.

Ms Inger Andersen of UNEP expressed her thanks to the Chair for her exemplary leadership over the last four years and at the HLM, as well as to GLG members and Quadripartite partners. She conveyed three main messages: (1) The HLM was a key milestone in the response to AMR, with stronger recognition of the environment, due credit given to the GLG, and great trust shown in the Quadripartite organizations on the part of Member States; (2) The task now is to translate the commitments into coordinated action across sectors. Managing antimicrobial effluent and wastewater from industry, farms and municipal sources remains a high priority for UNEP; and (3) It is critical to maintain momentum through targeted advocacy, including for laws and models to support wastewater management; to influence the agendas of the G7, G20 and other groups; and to mobilize the private sector and international financing institutions.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of WHO also thanked the Chair for her leadership and all GLG members and his fellow Quadripartite principals for their work on the HLM. He also noted the importance of financing for the AMR response and for attention to data, implementing national AMR action plans and strengthening the Quadripartite collaboration. He noted that the global target to reduce AMR-related deaths by 10 per cent by 2030 is modest, and that countries could set higher, individual targets. As there is no specific target on antimicrobial use in the agri-food sector, it is important to continue to push on and monitor the commitment to meaningful reductions. He also thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting the 4th Ministerial Meeting, which is a good opportunity to follow up and maintain momentum.

In video remarks, Dr Emmanuelle Soubeyran of WOAHA commended the collective success of the political declaration, the instrumental role of the GLG, and the leadership of the Chair and co-facilitators. The declaration is sufficiently actionable to advance the response to AMR, and the GLG should now help to accelerate implementation by increasing its political influence across sectors, including through a focus on the financial sector. WOAHA's four priorities going forward are (1) prevention of disease; (2) surveillance; (3) cross-sectoral collaboration; and (4) sustainable financing. Dr Soubeyran noted that antibiotics will remain an important tool to treat disease in animals, and that the focus of WOAHA in support of its members will be on reducing antimicrobial use in animals based on international standards, including the promotion of vaccination, phase-out of use for growth promotion, and increasing investments in and access to animal health services.

1. Agenda item 1: General update from the Secretariat

The GLG reviewed the Secretariat report, which focused on advocacy in advance of the 2024 UNGA high-level meeting on AMR. GLG members gave specific guidance to the Secretariat on GLG engagement with the WHO pandemic accord process and major political blocs, and the ESCMID partnership.

1.1 GLG efforts in the last few months focused on promoting its recommendations for and achieving a successful outcome at the HLM. Dr Jean-Pierre Nyemazi, acting director of the Quadripartite Joint Secretariat on AMR, introduced the session with a presentation on GLG support for preparations for the HLM. The GLG made a significant contribution to the HLM process, including by making recommendations and issuing an urgent call to action to Member States; working with the co-facilitators to support drafting of the initial text; meeting with national delegations and New York missions; briefing Member States; and undertaking targeted outreach to the African Union, low-and middle-income countries (LMICs) and civil society. At the HLM itself, the GLG Chair participated in the opening and raised AMR in the general debate, GLG member Minister Anywar participated in the closing, and several members participated in

multistakeholder panel discussions and side-events. The GLG Chair and Quadripartite principals met during the HLM to discuss its outcomes and priorities for follow-up.

1.2 The GLG has also had broad engagement with other processes and stakeholders. Dr Nyemazi discussed the status of ongoing work by the WHO Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) to agree on a pandemic accord. The GLG has already made several inputs to the process, and AMR is mentioned twice in the current draft text (preamble and Article 4). He also noted the valuable recent engagement by GLG members with the Brazilian presidency of the G20, particularly through its health and agriculture working groups, and with the Italian G7 presidency. The 2024 G7 leaders and health ministers' communiques referenced AMR, as does the G20 agriculture ministers' declaration. Dr Nyemazi sought guidance from the GLG on future engagement with these and other key political blocs, as well as with the European Society for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Disease (ESCMID), which has invited the GLG to co-host another event in Vienna in April 2025, building upon the joint events in 2023 and 2024.

1.3 In the discussion, GLG members gave the following guidance:

- *GLG member Dame Sally Davies, facilitator of the GLG task force on the pandemic instrument, will work with the Secretariat to coordinate GLG inputs to the INB, as appropriate.* Ongoing GLG advocacy on the pandemic accord is important, particularly to retain the current language on AMR, and to ensure that the instrument is focused on the needs of LMICs. Because the debates between North and South over access to vaccines and sharing of data have been reflected in negotiations on both pandemics and AMR, the GLG is of the view that resolving this tension in one area can help to resolve it in the other.
- *The GLG should define and communicate GLG asks to major political blocs and develop an engagement strategy into 2025.* Engagement with the G7 and G20 is consistently challenging due to the breadth of issues under discussion and the current focus on international conflicts. Because the GLG's role is to achieve political impact, it should continue to advocate strongly with the G7 and G20 and develop specific asks of these groups that relate to implementation of the political declaration, including the need for increased financing. The need to give more priority to engagement with the G77 to amplify demand for action was reiterated.
- *The Secretariat should work with ESCMID on planning the 2025 joint event and develop draft criteria for future partnerships based on the discussion.* Most GLG members agreed that ESCMID is an important global platform of researchers and health practitioners and that the annual global meeting is a valuable opportunity for the GLG to help foster links between researchers and policymakers on AMR. It was noted that ESCMID is human-centric, and that the joint event should have a strong One Health focus. Beyond this specific event, it was proposed that the GLG should define general criteria for entering new partnerships, and that these should include a strong focus on the needs of LMICs.

2. Agenda item 2: Fourth Ministerial Conference on AMR, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, November 15-16, 2024

The GLG received an update on preparations for the conference and were invited to provide inputs into the ministerial declaration and to participate in the event.

2.1 H.E. Fahd bin Abdurrahman Al-Jalajel, Minister of Health, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, updated the GLG on preparations for the meeting. The Minister noted that the meeting will take place on November 15-16, 2024, with a program for non-state actors on November 14, and personally invited the GLG Chair and members to attend. The six foci for the meeting are (1) More joined-up thinking through a stronger role for the Quadripartite; (2) Establishment of the independent panel; (3) Establishment of an AMR One Health learning hub in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; (4) A regional AMR access and logistics hub; (5) A new, common AMR roadmap for development banks; and (6) More work with the biotech community to create a sustainable

financing envelope for the AMR response. Consultations on the first draft of the meeting outcome document, the Jeddah Commitments, are ongoing, with written comments requested by November 1, and finalization of the document expected by early November.

2.2 Discussion: The GLG thanked the Minister for his leadership and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its commitment to AMR and for hosting this important meeting. GLG members who will be attending expressed interest in meeting as a group while in Jeddah. The GLG secretariat will contact the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to explore holding a dinner meeting for GLG members attending the conference.

3. Agenda item 3: Political advocacy post-UNGA high-level meeting on AMR

The GLG reviewed and discussed the outcomes of the 2024 political declaration on AMR and identified priorities for advocacy and action moving forward.

3.1 The GLG Secretariat presented a summary of issues and outcomes related to the 2024 UNGA HLM on AMR.

Para 23 of the political declaration acknowledged the contributions of the GLG and others to the process. Dr Nyemazi summarized the key outcomes in the declaration compared to GLG recommendations in the areas of disease prevention; reduction of antimicrobial use; accountable, effective and multisectoral governance; surveillance and monitoring for action on AMR; environmental aspects of AMR; and targets to accelerate progress. While only three of the five targets proposed by the GLG were included, the GLG recommendations were closely considered by Member States.

3.2 Discussions: All GLG members warmly thanked the Chair for her remarkable leadership around the HLM. They also thanked the Quadripartite principals and the HLM co-facilitators. The following issues were raised by GLG members:

- **Maintain the momentum, build on the narrative:** It is now important for the GLG to help maintain the momentum with continued advocacy for the commitments to have ownership by governments and be translated into action at the national level. Although there was some disappointment about targets, the GLG should “take the wins” and set an ambitious agenda for the next year, building on the narrative of the political declaration, including attention to its gaps. The key wins include strong language on prevention in animal health, minimizing use of antimicrobials in animals important for human medicine and meaningful reductions in antimicrobials in the agri-food sector. The message that “healthy animals do not need antibiotics” is powerful for future advocacy. Financing, evidence and awareness raising are all key issues moving forward. In terms of future impact, the GLG should emphasize the most recent data and estimates of AMR burden. Overall, the GLG needs to be more political, with more institutional participation and more use of its convening role to bring stakeholders together. More resources are needed for the Secretariat to support the GLG in these important tasks.

Taken together, the targets and text in the political declaration provide a good basis for further advocacy and action. The GLG should prioritize ensuring that the targets in the political declaration gain traction in countries as part of the evolving strategic narrative. It should also be kept in mind that targets can be important for strategy development, attracting investment, and measuring progress, and that countries can set higher targets if they choose to do so. The GLG can support achievement of meaningful reductions in antimicrobial use in the agri-food sector by reminding countries that (1) WOA’s ANIMUSE provides a method for them to set their own targets and (2) countries have committed to use WOA and CODEX standards. WOA standards define responsible use as use with veterinary guidance that does not include use for growth promotion.

- **Ensure a strong focus on financing, including development banks and the private sector:** The political declaration provides scope for further work to address major financing gaps for the AMR response. In

addition to the priority set out by the Chair in her remarks, the GLG should prioritize work with international financing institutions (IFIs) e.g. by convening or more formally engaging global and regional development banks, in collaboration with the World Bank. The 2025 spring meetings could provide such an opportunity. It should be feasible for many IFIs to expand investment targets related to AMR through existing mechanisms, including for “AMR-sensitive” financing. However, some IFIs need more knowledge and expertise with regard to AMR. Empowering the MPTF with a broader donor base is a high priority. The Quadripartite mapping of funding opportunities requested by Member States will be important to help countries navigate the financing landscape and provide insight into the need for better coordination of financing for the AMR response. Because more pull incentives are needed to stimulate R&D, the existing ones should be mapped and their implementation monitored through the G7. More coordination of these incentives may be needed.

- **Strengthen the evidence base, including establishment of the independent panel, and communicate it better to countries:** Overall, the IPEA is critical to building the evidence base and communicating it better to countries. While the political declaration gives the Quadripartite the lead, the GLG wishes to play an active role in supporting a transparent consultation process for the independent panel. The Quadripartite organizations should develop proposals on the establishment of the independent panel and enable GLG engagement with this process. Dame Sally Davies offered to work with Minister Anywar to help facilitate GLG engagement with the Quadripartite organizations on this issue. The Secretariat will also work with the Chair to advance her priority on global communications and awareness raising.
- **Revisit R&D and access:** The GLG should pay further attention to financing and development of and access to antibiotics, using the discussion paper and recommendations it published in February 2024 as the basis for further work.
- **Support a rapid update of the Global Action Plan on AMR:** The GLG encourages a rapid update of the GAP that does not consume the Quadripartite organizations for the next year, because their priorities now should be on delivery, implementation and country support. New elements of the GAP would include the environment and targets.
- **Secretariat to review and update GLG action plan:** Following the appointment of new GLG members in the new year to fill upcoming vacancies, the Secretariat will review and update the GLG action plan for GLG approval to reflect the post-HLM priorities raised in the discussion, with a view to having an updated GLG action plan by the end of Q1 2025.

4. Close of the meeting

The Vice Chair noted that his term and that of several other GLG members will end in the coming few months. Reflecting on the GLG’s major accomplishment since its creation four years ago, he emphasized that, above all, it had helped the UN Member States to agree on a path forward. The hard part – doing it – lies ahead. The GLG role needs to evolve to advocate not for what needs to be done, but getting it done, including by supporting effective, transparent and adequately resourced institutions, partnerships and processes. He suggested that it would be helpful to identify those areas in the political declaration where the GLG wishes to take leadership and plan actions and goals towards the next UNGA events on AMR in 2026 and 2029. He thanked all GLG members for their dedication to AMR over the last four years.

/end