

G20 Summit in India Focuses on One Health and AMR

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Introduction

The 18th Heads of State and Government Summit of the Group of 20 (G20) is scheduled for September 9th and 10th, 2023, in New Delhi, India. Under India's presidency, the 2023 G20 summit adopts the theme "One Earth, One Family, One Future," rooted in the Sanskrit phrase "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" from the Maha Upanishad. This theme underscores the intrinsic value of humans, animals, plants, and microorganisms and their interconnectedness within Earth's ecosystem and the broader universe.

This thematic alignment highlights the pertinence of the G20 Summit 2023 in New Delhi, India, as it embraces the "One Health" concept, recognizing the interdependence of human, animal, and environmental health. Comprising 19 countries and the European Union, the G20 consists of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, and the US. India presides over the G20 from December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023.

Over the past three decades, the global scientific community has exerted significant efforts to combat various infectious disease outbreaks, including SARS, Ebola, Covid-19, and more. A central topic of discussion at the summit was "One Health," an approach that acknowledges the intricate interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. In line with the One Health approach, G20 leaders collectively pledged to prioritize addressing antimicrobial resistance.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) has evolved into a persistent global public health challenge, with projections estimating a staggering 10 million annual deaths worldwide by 2050. AMR represents the capacity of bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites to withstand the medications intended to combat them. This growing global predicament poses a substantial threat to advancements in public health. Recognizing that AMR cannot be resolved by any single sector in isolation, the One Health approach necessitates collaboration among professionals in human health, animal health, and environmental health. The G20 leaders articulated specific actions aimed at addressing AMR:

1. **Supporting Research and Development:** Championing the research and development of novel antimicrobial agents, particularly those effective against multidrug-resistant bacteria.

2. **Enhancing Infection Control Measures:** Striving to improve infection prevention and control practices within hospitals, healthcare facilities, and other relevant settings.
3. **Promoting Antimicrobial Stewardship:** Advocating for the prudent and effective use of antimicrobials to ensure their efficacy when needed.
4. **Strengthening Surveillance:** Heightening efforts to monitor AMR and antimicrobial consumption.
5. **Sharing Knowledge:** Facilitating the exchange of information and best practices pertaining to AMR.
6. **Reducing Demand:** Undertaking initiatives to curtail the demand for antimicrobials, such as promoting vaccination and fostering good hygiene practices.

The G20 Summit stands as a substantial stride toward addressing AMR on a global scale. The One Health approach provides a comprehensive framework for nations to collaborate in confronting this multifaceted challenge. Beyond the AMR focus, G20 leaders engaged in discussions on various other global health challenges, including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, noncommunicable diseases, and maternal and child health. Furthermore, they collectively committed to fortify global health systems and enhance access to quality healthcare for all.

This summit serves as a reminder that global health responsibility is a shared endeavor. By working collaboratively, nations can advance efforts to enhance the health and well-being of people worldwide. The G20 leaders' commitment to addressing AMR represents a promising step forward. Nevertheless, it is vital to recognize that AMR is a multifaceted challenge that demands sustained efforts over an extended period. The G20 countries must continue their collaborative work to implement the agreed-upon actions and make substantial progress in this crucial area. Additionally, health-related discussions encompassed the following:

- **Strengthening Global Health Systems:** A commitment to enhancing primary healthcare, the health workforce, and essential health services and systems, aiming to surpass pre-pandemic standards within the next 2-3 years. Ongoing efforts toward polio eradication and combatting epidemics, including AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis, and water-borne and other communicable

diseases, were emphasized. Recognition of the importance of research on long COVID was also noted.

- **Promoting a One Health-Based Approach:** Driven by the Quadripartite's One Health Joint Plan of Action (2022-2026).
- **Enhancing Resilience of Health Systems:** Supporting the development of climate-resilient and low-carbon health systems, in collaboration with Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs). Additionally, support for the WHO-led Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH) was expressed.
- **Facilitating Equitable Access:** Ensuring equitable access to safe, effective, quality-assured, and affordable vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and other medical countermeasures, particularly in Low- and Middle-income Countries (LMICs), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- **Pandemic Preparedness:** Expressing anticipation of a successful outcome in the ongoing negotiations at the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) for an ambitious, legally binding WHO convention, agreement, or other international instruments on pandemic preparedness and response (WHO CA+) by May 2024. Also, amendments to enhance the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) were highlighted.
- **Recognition of Traditional and Complementary Medicine:** Acknowledging the potential role of evidence-based Traditional and Complementary Medicine in health and taking note of international efforts in this realm,

including WHO's global and collaborating centers and clinical trial registries.

- **Promoting Access to Mental Health Services:** Focusing on enhancing access to mental health services and psychosocial support in an inclusive manner.
- **Addressing the World Drug Problem:** Calling for robust international counter-narcotics cooperation without unnecessary restrictions, including information sharing and capacity building to disrupt the production and proliferation of illicit drugs, including synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals, at their origins, in transit, and at destination points.

In conclusion, the G20 Summit in India represents a significant milestone in addressing global health challenges, notably AMR, through a One Health approach. The commitments made by G20 leaders reflect a positive trajectory, although one that requires sustained and collaborative efforts to achieve lasting impact. Moreover, the summit underscores the collective responsibility of nations in safeguarding global health and promoting equitable access to healthcare services and resources.

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