

**Joint Statement on behalf of the Co-Chairs and 24 members of
the Group of Friends of Solidarity for Global Health Security**

Interactive Dialogue with Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng

**Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest
attainable standard of physical and mental health**

3rd Committee of the UN General Assembly,

Item 72 – Human Rights,

29 October 2020, New York

Madam Chair,

I have the honour to deliver these remarks on behalf of the Co-Chairs and 24 members of the Group of Friends of Solidarity for Global Health Security.

We welcome the convening of today's interactive dialogue with Special Rapporteur Tlaleng Mofokeng and seize this opportunity to reaffirm our full support for her mandate and essential work.

While the entire global community has been combating the current pandemic for nearly a year, COVID-19 is not the first – and nor will it be the last – infectious disease to strike with devastating impact. The emergence of new and recurring infectious diseases, and their rapid, worldwide spread has dominated our life cycles. These pose significant threats to the physical and mental health and safety of the global population.

While it is impossible to accurately forecast all the global health challenges of tomorrow, a stronger global partnership toward public health is certainly needed today.

In this regard, we believe it is imperative to improve prevention, detection, and response through coordinated public health measures, strong multi-sectoral and multilateral collaborations, and technological innovation.

To achieve this, the sharing of reliable information, data, and experiences is vital. We have highlighted the need to improve data collection, enhance the data disaggregated by gender, age, and disabilities, and work on regular, timely, and transparent exchanges.

To mitigate impacts on the physical and mental health of the global population, we believe that sustainable solutions should be based on transparency, openness, democracy, civic engagement and the full respect for human rights and dignity. In this respect, we take this opportunity to reiterate that emergency measures must be targeted, necessary, temporary, non-discriminatory, and proportionate.

We have highlighted those with the greatest needs, such as children and youth, women and girls, persons with disabilities, and older persons. Their safe and unhindered access to health services and humanitarian assistances should be a priority in the ongoing response and recovery during this public health crisis. We will listen to such vulnerable groups and strive to ensure that they are empowered with further opportunities to reshape our societies in a more inclusive and sustainable manner.

We are committed to presenting a united front and a dynamic platform to connect with each other and encourage all stakeholders to work on collective action to help make the global population safer and more secure from infectious disease threats. It is time to translate statements and commitments into tangible action, and to work together to deliver meaningful and measurable global health security.

Ms. Special Rapporteur,

What do you believe would be the most desirable and effective partnerships to advance global health? I thank you.

<Signed>

The Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Solidarity for Global Health Security, namely Canada, Denmark, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Sierra Leone, and the State of Qatar, and its members Australia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Republic of Fiji, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Kenya, Mongolia, Nicaragua, the Republic of Palau, Paraguay, Peru, the Republic of Malta, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.