



Organisation
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de la Santé
Animale

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Health

Organización
Mundial
de Sanidad
Animal

G20 Health Ministers meeting

Opening speech - Dr Monique Eloit,

Director General of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)

Rome, 5 September 2021

Your Excellency, Roberto Speranza, Minister of Health of the Italian Republic,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank the Italian G20 Presidency for inviting the World Organisation for Animal Health and to congratulate it for its support to the One Health approach which reflects the inextricable relationships between human health and animal health, and environmental health.

This One Health approach was several times highlighted during the Global Health summit held last May and in the “Rome declaration”, consequently.

It is also reflected in the “One Health call to action” prepared ahead of this meeting and which was drafted with the support of OIE, FAO, WHO and UNEP.

In this regard, the presence today of these four organisations well known yet as the “Tripartite+” must be understood as our commitment to work together, so that the One Health approach is not only a nice Global concept, but a concrete action plan with clear priorities to be implemented both at regional and national levels.

The last few months require us not to delay to identify the relevant work programmes but above all to act to better prevent future crises and be better prepared for them although the current one is not under control yet. There is a need to work fast.

Today, the Tripartite+ have already established the One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) which will support the development of a long-term strategic approach to reducing the risk of zoonotic pandemics. OHHLEP is already supporting the Tripartite+ to develop a One Health Global Action Plan as previously mentioned by the FAO’s DG.

The OIE is committed to contribute to this Plan, in particular for the first track which aims at strengthening Health Systems and the capacities of the concerned workforces, which notably include Veterinary Services, to predict, prevent, detect and respond to global health risks and emergencies.

In this regard, I would like to mention the longstanding cooperation with WHO in performing National Bridging Workshops to support our Members in implementing the International Health Regulation and the OIE International Standards when considering zoonosis control. Despite the Covid-19 context, this program was never interrupted and its continues to provide useful information's on the existing gaps in complying with international rules and on the needs of our Members in terms of capacity building.

This is why I am particularly pleased that the G20 Health Ministers' Declaration mentions the role of the WHO Academy and the commitment to develop One Health learning opportunities jointly with the OIE Training platform and other potential partners. Capacity building is instrumental to not only address potential next crises but also for the daily management of so many challenges which threat human, animal and planetary health.

However, Excellencies, for the sustainability of all these projects such as the One Health High Level Expert Panel, our Tripartite+ ambitious One Health Global Plan of Action, the cooperative One Health capacity building system we are developing, without forgetting the need for data sharing (and for this purpose the WHO Hub for Pandemic end Epidemic Intelligence will be instrumental), for all these initiatives, we also need adequate and sustainable funding.

Let me thus welcome the initiative of the Italian Presidency to set up a "G20 Finance & Health Informal Group" to discuss these issues because we need clarity when it comes to multiple initiatives due to the risks of fragmentation, duplication and overlaps.

The OIE is therefore committed to work with partners to precise the most appropriate financial mechanism.

Finally, regarding issues of prevention and preparedness for pandemic risks, I reiterate the commitment of the OIE to collaborate in efforts to improve Global health and to contribute to the works for the preparation of a possible future instrument.

Excellencies, as Ministers, you have a key role to play, not only by endorsing an additional high-level declaration or by adopting a possible new international instrument. By breaking silos, as well as by promoting an intersectoral collaboration between Departments at national level, our respective commitments at global level will be impactful. That is our common responsibility to success in tackling the current pandemic as well as in preventing the next one.

In this, you can always count on the OIE, together with its partner organisations.

Thank you.