

Newsletter Summary

The 6th Global Health Security Agenda Ministerial Meeting “Bridging Cooperative Action for Global Health Security”

18- 20 November 2020

Virtual Meeting Hosted by the Royal Thai Government

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The 6th Global Health Security Agenda Ministerial Meeting was held virtually during 18-20 November 2020 with the main objectives to exchange experiences on disease prevention and control among various sectors and countries, update the progress of action package implementation, enhance the engagement of multi-sectoral cooperation, identify gaps of implementation and fill them with concrete actions as well as jointly address means and ways forward to improve the GHSA mechanism and collaboration on global health security concerns. The meeting was attended by distinguished delegates from participating GHSA members (354 delegates from 47 countries, private sector, development partners and other relevant sectors (1109 observers from 97 countries). Supplementing the Ministerial Meeting, there were 16 important side meetings organized by the GHSA members and development partners.

During the three days of the Ministerial Meeting, the participants had a great opportunity to discuss and share information on the key crucial issues including the balancing between health & economy, multisectoral cooperation, the whole-of-society approach to respond to disease outbreaks, and sustainable financial investments. The meeting highlighted the following issues and recommendations:

1. 'Mass Compliance' on basic public health preventive measures to minimize COVID-19 transmission in the community before the delivery of an innovative vaccine is VITAL
2. Investment for capacity building - prevention, detect & response is so important.
3. Health security is a global issue, thus, we need to work together. A multi-government approach is needed. We need to reach out beyond the health sector: engage the financial sector, learn from existing best practices and improve networking and collaborations
4. COVID-19 has shown that world is still ill-prepared against pandemic threats. We need technical but also political readiness and good governance.
5. A strong vision is needed to prepare for the next pandemics. Achieving GHSA targets is a marathon, not a sprint.
6. There is a need to improve coordination between GHSA members, action packages and various health and non-health stakeholders by using a multi-sectoral ONE HEATH approach

7. We need well-targeted policies tailored towards supporting health care systems but also to improve the socio-economic situation and aid the recovery of the economy
8. COVID-19 created major supply shocks, increased food prices and largely impacted the labor market, the education system, tourism and building of human capital. Thus, we need global solidarity to combat COVID-19. A vaccine and fast diagnosis are overarching tools to protect people from public health threats.
9. It is a falsehood to have to choose between health and the economy, they are integrated and interdependent. We need to ensure the balance between the implementation of disease control and maintaining economic systems
10. Health is not cost but an investment. There is a need to rethink policies to build back stronger.
11. Governments need to prepare for the next pandemic by investing in social insurance and financing health systems
12. GHSA plays a significant role to work across sectors to prevent detect and respond to health threats and needs to continue during peace time and not only during pandemics

At the last session of the Ministerial Meeting, there was a “Handover of Chairmanship Ceremony” which transferred the Chairmanship of the GHSA Steering Members from the Netherlands to Thailand. Above all, the chair of the meeting also declared “the Chair’s Declaration” which expressed the strong commitment of GHSA members to continue to implement global health security actions. The commitment emphasized the four main issues as follows:

1. The need to intensify our concerted efforts in achieving the GHSA 2024 Overarching Target
2. The need for global solidarity to nurture multi-sectoral cooperation and collaboration with relevant sectors at all levels taking a One Health approach to address root causes, and establish early warning systems and risk reduction initiatives of global health security threats and mitigate their impacts;
3. Continued technical support of the Tripartite (FAO/OIE/WHO collaboration)
4. *The collaboration of* GHSA Action Packages, Task Forces, and key stakeholders to initiate and further advocate priority issues including development of diagnostic, vaccines and therapeutic treatments, management of PPE, strengthening of biosafety and biosecurity and laboratory systems, enhancing workforce development, investment in innovative techniques and research development, maximizing existing regional and global networks, as well as sharing best practices.

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