



PANELISTS NAMED TO JOIN THE INDEPENDENT PANEL FOR PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

3 September 2020 - GENEVA

Today, the Co-Chairs of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response announced the names of the panelists.

The Co-Chairs are the former President of Liberia, Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and the former Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Rt Hon Helen Clark.

“Today, we are pleased to present eleven excellent panelists representing a wealth of experience from health and broader societal perspectives,” said Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. “We look forward to intense work together at a key moment in history. In order to honour the more than 25.6 million people who have fallen ill, and more than 850,000 who have died due to COVID-19, we have no time to waste.”

The Independent Panel will hold its first meeting on 17 September 2020. Following that, it is expected to seek evidence and views from a broad range of stakeholders including from World Health Organization (WHO) Member States, health experts, economists, specialists on the social impacts of the pandemic, from civil society, the private sector, and from the general public.

“In the course of this year, COVID-19 has spread around the world, impacting in one way or another on the lives of every person on our planet,” said Helen Clark. “We intend to learn all that we can about its early emergence, global spread, health, economic and social impacts, and how it has been controlled and mitigated. The Panel’s recommendations will aim to support effective management of the pandemic and strengthen how the world can prepare for and respond to future pandemics.”

The Co-Chairs were appointed by the WHO Director-General to lead an impartial, independent and comprehensive evaluation of the international health response to COVID-19 coordinated by WHO, in accordance with the request in [a resolution](#) at the 73rd World Health Assembly.

The Co-Chairs reviewed more than 120 excellent candidates from around the world with diverse backgrounds. They made the final appointments based on skills (including expertise in outbreak response, managing national health systems, leadership in youth and community engagement, socio-economic analytical capabilities), knowledge about the international system including WHO and experience from similar international processes.

All panel members will serve in their individual capacity and will not represent either their government nor specific organisational interests.

Panel members will be supported by an independent Secretariat based at the Health Campus in Geneva, Switzerland. The Independent Panel will meet approximately every six weeks from September through to

April. The Co-Chairs will present a briefing at a Special Session of the WHO Executive Board (EB) in October, to the resumed 73rd World Health Assembly in November, and again to the regular EB meeting in January.

The Panel is expected to submit their report to the 74th World Health Assembly in May 2021.

The Panel members are:

- **Rt Hon. Helen Clark**, former Prime Minister of New Zealand (Co-Chair)
- **Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**, former President of Liberia and Nobel Laureate (Co-Chair)
- **Mauricio Cárdenas**, an economist and former Finance Minister of Colombia.
- **Aya Chebbi** from Tunisia, African Union Special Envoy on Youth, diplomat, pan-African activist and feminist.
- **Mark Dybul** from the USA, Professor at Georgetown University and former head of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria and of PEPFAR.
- **Michel Kazatchkine**, Professor and global health diplomat from France; and a former head of the Global Fund.
- **Joanne Liu**, a Canadian physician, who formerly led Médecins Sans Frontières, including during the Ebola response.
- **Precious Matsoso**, former Director-General of Health from South Africa, and former Chair of the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee for the WHO Emergencies Programme.
- **David Miliband**, CEO of the International Rescue Committee, and former Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom.
- **Thoraya Obaid**, former Executive Director of UNFPA, from Saudi Arabia.
- **Preeti Sudan**, Former Secretary of Health of India, and former Vice Chair of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.
- **Ernesto Zedillo**, Economist and Former President of Mexico.
- **Zhong Nanshan**, Professor of Pulmonology from China, and Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Thoracic Disease.

Media briefing: The Co-Chairs will hold a briefing on 3 September via web conference from 1400-1430 CET. Media can join by registering at [this link](#).

An update to the media will be provided following the first meeting on 17 September 2020.

For more information:

The Independent Panel's website: www.TheIndependentPanel.org.

Media and other stakeholders interested in continued updates can **join our mailing list** through [this form](#).

Media enquiries can be directed to Christine McNab, Independent Panel Communication Lead, ChristineMcNab@gmail.com, and at +1 416 986 2068 (residing in Toronto, Canada). **Enquiries to the Secretariat:** Secretariat@ipppr.org.