

## Panel for a Global Public Health Convention: Statement to IGWG6

March 25, 2026

In these final, crucial days, we urge Member States not to lose sight of the PABS' Systems twin goals: the rapid sharing of pathogen materials and sequence information for public health purposes, and the equitable sharing of benefits that flow from their use on *equal footing*.

Nor should they lose sight of the broader promise of the Pandemic Agreement — its hard-won, mutually reinforcing provisions spanning prevention, health system strengthening, additional equity measures, and essential governance, financing and implementation mechanisms – all awaiting adoption at this year's World Health Assembly. The public expects States to deliver on that promise.

After five formal IGWG sessions, States' positions are now well known. Additional negotiating days may be necessary, but a long extension that papers over unresolved issues risks diluting the text, with broader implications for public health and trust. Member States should prioritize reaching consensus on the substance before negotiating any extension, as divergence in expectations about the timeline is as much an obstacle to agreement as divergence in positions.

States should arrive at a common understanding about key aspects of the System's functioning:

- First, how traceability and accountability can be ensured across a diverse landscape of sequence databases, including the role of unique persistent identifiers, regulatory authorities, and database governance conditions;
- Second, the minimum requirements for legally binding contracts governing commercial users, and terms for non-commercial uses that faithfully operationalize Article 12 in full, and how these arrangements will deliver benefits in peace time, scaling up through a PHEIC to a pandemic emergency; and
- Third, what activities monetary contributions are intended to support, at what level, and at what point they must be secured.

Most importantly, the PABS System must meaningfully change the status quo. A weak, unbalanced, or vague Annex will not just fall short – it will institutionalize the asymmetries this Agreement was designed to correct. Civil society still stands ready to support the IGWG and Member States and will be with them through to the Agreement's ratification and implementation.