

Statement on agenda item 7.1.3—Research and development for potentially epidemic diseases

Delivered January 24, 2017 at the 140th session of the World Health Organization Executive Board

Chairperson, Honorable Ministers, distinguished delegates, and colleagues,

Global Health Council would like to take this opportunity to highlight several points for your consideration regarding agenda item 7.1, Research and development for potentially epidemic diseases. This statement is supported by PATH and the Global Health Technologies Coalition (GHTC).

Global Health Council and Coalition members, including PATH, have decades of real-world experience in the development, scale-up, and delivery of a range of lifesaving technologies, including vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, and devices. As organizations that have been working to develop innovative global health solutions we know directly that research and development (R&D) for potentially epidemic diseases is a critical component in stopping an outbreak from becoming an epidemic. As such, we fully welcome the goal of the R&D blueprint; the global community must reduce the delays between the identification of an outbreak and the deployment of effective medical interventions to save lives and minimize socioeconomic disruption.

In particular, we strongly welcome efforts to better coordinate R&D both through the R&D observatory and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations; prioritize the development of platform technologies that can be used against multiple diseases; work to build tools to better facilitate collaborative R&D; invest in systems innovation that compliments new technologies; and regulatory capacity strengthening to support innovative new models for clinical trials for emerging diseases in affected countries. It is critical that reliable and sufficient funding for the development of tools as well as regulatory and procurement systems to deliver them be prioritized. We call for the WHO and member states to accelerate progress, and look forward to working with relevant stakeholders to help achieve these objectives.