

Statement to the second Joint Plenary Session Working Group on the International Health Regulations (WGIHR) and Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB).

February 2024

While different in nature and scope we believe that an updated, operational and universally agreed International Health Regulations (IHR) is critical for the fulfilment of other international instruments aiming at a global and equitable response to Pandemics and other health emergencies such as the one being discussed by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) for almost two years.

We appreciate the common ground identified by the Secretariat and we agree on the importance, for the sake of coherence, to align definitions of key instances like the declaration of public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC); we welcome the endorsement of the One Health Approach as a shared approach to deal with anti-microbial resistance (AMR); we recognize the difficulties involved in both processes in reaching a consensus on equity and financing.

HAI, as many other public interest organisations, believe that equity can not be just a principle or a line in the preamble but an overarching operational directive that guides the implementation of IHR and any additional international instrument to prevent and respond pandemics and health emergencies. And this equity is expressed in specific ways in defining sound financing mechanisms and laying down clear, enforceable and sustainable Access and Benefit Sharing clauses including pathogens.

Lastly we wish to reaffirm the critical role that technology transfer, know-how sharing and health-oriented IP interpretation/enforcement has played, and will no doubt go on playing, in ensuring that the response to pandemics does not depend neither on boundaries nor income and access to health technologies is enhanced and unhindered.

-End-