



TWO REGIONS, ONE FUTURE

Financing Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Build Global Health Security

CONFERENCE ROOM 1, UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK
TUESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2026; 3:30–5:00 P.M. (EDT)

CALL TO ORDER:

Dr. Cecilia Mundaca Shah, Vice President of Global Health Strategy, UN Foundation

3:30 P.M.

HIGH-LEVEL ADDRESSES

Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response: Political Commitments and Economic Security

H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

H.E. Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi and Chairperson of the African Union

H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission

H.E. Dr. Carla Natalie Barnett, Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

3:35 P.M.

Regional Keynotes

H.E. Dr. Jean Kaseya, Director General, Africa CDC

Dr. Jarbas Barbosa Jr., Director, Pan American Health Organization

Moderator: Amb. Anne-Claire Amprou, French Ambassador for Global Health and Chair of the Executive Board of UNITAID

MINISTERIAL PANEL

From Assessment to Action: Financing Evidence-based, Country-Driven and Regionally Coordinated Pandemic Preparedness at Scale

Hon. Dr. Frank Anthony, Minister of Health, Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Senator Hon. Lisa Cummins, Minister of Health and Wellness, Government of Barbados

Hon. Dr. Yvan Butera, Minister of State for Health, Government of Rwanda

Hon. Dr. Kwabena Mintah Akandoh, Minister of Health, Government of Ghana

Hon. Dr. Douglas Mombeshora, Minister of Health and Child Care, Government of Zimbabwe

Ms. Priya Basu, Executive Head, Pandemic Fund Secretariat

Mr. Javier Guzmán, Chief of the Health, Nutrition, and Population Division, Inter-American Development Bank

Moderator: H.E. Dr. Mekdes Daba, Minister of Health, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

4:10 P.M.

CLOSING REMARKS

4:55 P.M.

YOU MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED IN: "OXYGEN FOR LIFE"

An immersive VR experience on medical oxygen delivery in Zambia.

September 22, 11:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m., UHC Pavilion.

Register via the Devex Impact House site.



AfricaCDC
Centres for Disease Control
and Prevention



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UNGA81 high-level side event organized by the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Burundi, in collaboration with Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and with support from the United Nations Foundation

Venue: Conference Room 1, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Date & time: Tuesday, 22 September 2026; 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Registration link: [register here by September 15th](#).

[UN Web TV streaming](#) – Interpretation in ENG, FRA, SPA

CONTEXT

Pandemics are among the most severe systemic risks of our time. The COVID-19 pandemic starkly illustrated this: global GDP contracted sharply, supply chains fractured, tourism and trade collapsed. Across Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Africa, the impacts were particularly severe, with high mortality rates, strained health systems, and deep economic and social disruption. Recurrent outbreaks of dengue, cholera, Ebola and emerging zoonotic threats continue to expose structural vulnerabilities and strain public finances.

The ongoing Bundibugyo virus disease (BVD) outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a stark reminder of the persistent threat posed by infectious diseases with epidemic and pandemic potential and of the need for sustained preparedness before crises emerge. Across Latin America and the Caribbean, recent and ongoing outbreaks of measles and yellow fever—and the continued emergence of zoonotic threats such as hantavirus—similarly demonstrate how rapidly infectious disease risks can evolve and place pressure on national health systems. Together, these epidemic threats underscore the critical importance of sustained investment in pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPPR) to enable countries to detect threats early, contain outbreaks at their source, and prevent their escalation into larger national, regional or global health emergencies.

The clearest lesson from recent crises is that preparedness pays in lives saved and economic losses averted. Countries across LAC and Africa that have invested in core preparedness capacities have demonstrated greater resilience and faster response times. Strengthened surveillance systems and genomic sequencing networks have enabled earlier detection and more effective containment of outbreaks. Well established regional and national Emergency Operations Centers have enhanced decision-making, while investments in surveillance and digital tools have improved detection in vulnerable populations. Other efforts from the Americas

and Africa also illustrate the progress achieved: strengthened public health institutions, more resilient health infrastructure, and sustained investments in immunization.

These examples confirm that investments in PPPR deliver tangible returns: they reduce the scale and cost of emergency response, protect essential services, and safeguard economic stability.

At the same time, the risk landscape is intensifying. Climate change, environmental degradation, rapid urbanization, and increased human–animal–environment interactions are accelerating the emergence and spread of infectious diseases. Countries across Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa are confronting many of these challenges while developing innovative approaches to One Health, preparedness and cross-border cooperation. Sustaining and scaling this progress requires investment that responds to nationally identified priorities while leveraging regional cooperation and international support where these can add value.

Countries must remain at the center and in the driver's seat of PPPR, defining their priorities and directing investments according to their national risks, needs and capacities. Regional public health organizations such as Africa CDC and PAHO can play a critical enabling role in supporting these nationally led efforts—providing technical cooperation, facilitating cross-border coordination and knowledge exchange, strengthening regional networks and public goods, and helping translate identified preparedness gaps into coherent and actionable investment priorities. By connecting national action with regional capacities and international cooperation and financing, these organizations can help countries achieve greater impact from PPPR investments, address shared and transboundary risks, and advance collective health security while preserving national ownership and leadership.

This joint Africa CDC PAHO side event aligns with the UNGA 81 High-Level Meeting on PPPR that aims to renew global political commitments and foster an equitable, multilateral approach to pandemics and public health emergencies. The challenge facing PPPR today is shifting from crisis-driven funding to sustained, strategic investment. PPPR must be understood not as a health expenditure, but as a cross-sectoral investment in economic resilience, national security, and sustainable development.

At a time when competing global priorities risk diluting attention and resources, this event advances a simple but urgent message: investing in pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response is among the most cost-effective ways to protect health, economic, and societal stability. It will build a shared agenda for sustained PPPR financing in Africa and the Americas, linking country priorities and regional public goods to coordinated domestic, regional, and global financing, while strengthening LAC–Africa collaboration and promoting investment in resilience, security, and sustainable development.



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