

NTI Statement for White House Virtual Global COVID-19 Summit

NTI commends President Biden for hosting a Global COVID-19 Summit and encourages all participants to commit to bold, decisive action to stem the devastating impacts of COVID-19 globally. NTI supports the [Framework for a Global Action Plan for COVID-19 Response](#), outlining a six-point action plan to end the current crisis.

NTI—a nonprofit, nonpartisan global security organization focused on reducing nuclear and biological threats imperiling humanity—commits to working for a more resilient global system, one that sustainably finances nations’ health security capacity and catalyzes global leadership to prevent biological threats, regardless of source. Future crises of this magnitude or worse can be reduced or prevented by driving resources to countries most in need, and toward the areas that remain the most vulnerable. Stronger biosafety, biosecurity, and research oversight capability is needed in countries globally, enhancing an often-overlooked component of health security necessary for preventing deliberate and accidental biological events with potentially catastrophic consequences.

NTI calls on leaders to promptly establish a new financing mechanism to provide sustainable, multi-year resources to fund preparedness for future pandemic threats, regardless of source, and global health security, such as the one backed by NTI, the Center for Global Development, and the Pandemic Action Network. This fund must be backed by strong monitoring and accountability measures, ensuring that we are effecting change where it is needed most. Sustainable financing mechanisms should be accompanied by efforts to promote the adoption of Universal Health Coverage to improve access to healthcare, a critical factor for national pandemic preparedness [as highlighted by the 2019 Global Health Security Index](#).

Further, we, collectively, must ensure that the international architecture is better positioned in the future to address high-consequence biological events. In addition to exploring the creation of a Global Health Threats Council, **[NTI calls for a permanent UN facilitator and unit within the Office of the UN Secretary-General dedicated to responding to biological crises](#)** that have the potential to overwhelm the capacities of the current international epidemic response systems and result in mass casualties.

Finally, to fill a critical global governance gap at the seam of health and security, **NTI encourages global partners to support efforts by experts across the public, private, academic, and philanthropic sectors, as led by NTI, to establish a new global biosecurity entity** that will reduce biotechnology-related risks by promoting biosecurity norms and incentivizing best biosecurity practices. Biotechnology and the biosciences are essential to combatting major health challenges like COVID-19. However, the same technologies used to combat a pandemic could be deliberately misused to create the next pandemic or yield a laboratory accident with catastrophic consequences. While COVID-19 garners the attention of world leaders and as funding toward new infrastructure and research increases, now is the time to act swiftly to reduce the risks of biological events that could meet or exceed the impacts of the current pandemic. Collectively, we must design a future where it is possible to develop and apply new biotechnologies while simultaneously advancing investments, practices, and tools to reduce their risks.

NTI is committed to working with governments, organizations, and individuals to bring about these systemic changes to achieve a world truly safe from infectious disease threats.

For more information, visit www.nti.org/bio