



Provisional programme

Engaging public representatives in biosecurity and pandemic preparedness

Tuesday 9 – Friday 12 November | WP1995V

To be held virtually

This meeting will be a launch event held online of a continent-wide program to enhance biosecurity. As the first host country to the initiative, we will focus our meeting on advancing and strengthening South Africa's biosafety and biosecurity system capabilities and its leadership role in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Africa-CDC Regional Collaborating Centre headquartered in Zambia, to prevent natural, accidental, or deliberate biological events. Discussions will focus on the need for comprehensive legislative action, adequate and sustained system financing, and strategic communications to build the necessary political will for domestic advancement as well as regional and continental leadership.

Meeting objectives include:

- Developing a common understanding of the methods required to prevent accidental and deliberate biological events given the risk environment in the Southern African region, including emerging biological risks, especially those posed by dual-use research and rapid advances in biotechnology.
- Enabling effective development, financing, and communication strategies for comprehensive policies and legislative actions using the Africa CDC Biosafety and Biosecurity Legislative Framework as a guide for domestic implementation.
- Advocating for the advancement of Biosafety and Biosecurity into a recognized professional programme through the establishment of a Regional Training and Certification Programme for Biosafety and Biosecurity Experts to build a workforce required for surge capacity in the Africa region.
- Identifying, minimizing, and removing where possible the barriers and obstacles to data and information sharing during routine and surge periods and developing legal and ethical public policy tools to gather and share epidemic and biological risk intelligence as a part of building regional advance warning systems; and
- Advocating for the building of strong multi-sectoral Southern African leadership to

In association with:



develop and expand regional capabilities to prevent and mitigate natural, accidental, or deliberate biological events within the context of Africa CDC's Biosafety and Biosecurity Initiative.

In association with Global Partnership against WMD, Global Affairs Canada, Africa CDC and NTI

Tuesday 9 November

Africa CDC's Initiative in Biosafety and Biosecurity, regulatory environments, and model legislation

**1400-1405
(UK-GMT)
0900-0905 (EST)
1600-1605 (CAT)
1700-1705 (EAT)**

**1405-1425
(UK-GMT)
0905-0925 (EST)
1605-1625 (CAT)
1705-1725 (EAT)**

**1425-1450
(UK-GMT)
0925-0950 (EST)
1625-1650 (CAT)
1725-1750 (EAT)**

**1450-1550
(UK-GMT)
0950-1050 (EST)
1650-1750 (CAT)
1750-1850 (EAT)**

Welcome and session overview

Issa Makumbi
Uganda PHEOC

1. Keynote remarks

Ahmed Ogwell Ouma
Africa CDC

Sacha Wallace-Sankarsingh
Caribbean Public Health Agency

2. Africa CDC's Initiative on Biosafety and Biosecurity

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention will provide an overview of the Initiative on Biosafety and Biosecurity, highlighting recent efforts to rapidly strengthen capacity across the African continent. The presentation will provide an overview of these efforts and outline a proposed path forward for national legislatures across the Continent, stressing the importance of strong, consistent commitment on the part of public representatives and civil society.

Talkmore Maruta
Africa CDC (Senior Biosafety and Biosecurity Officer)

3. Parliamentary engagement and oversight

This panel will delve deeply into the need for robust civil society and parliamentary engagement and oversight for biosafety and biosecurity. As part of these discussions, panellists should outline concrete and decisive ways each constituency can impact health security and create a world more safe and secure from infectious disease threats regardless of source.

Chair: Ludy Suryantoro
World Health Organisation

[INVITED] Hon. Cyril Xaba
MP, Chairman: Portfolio Committee of Defense and Military Veterans, South Africa

Judith February
University of the Witwatersrand

Zibusiso Masuku
National Health Laboratory Service, South Africa

Chinwe Lucia Ochu
Nigeria Centre for Disease Control

1550-1600
(UK-GMT)
1050-1100 (EST)
1750-1800 (CAT)
1850-1900 (EAT)

4. Closing remarks

Jonathan Jansen
Academy of Science of South Africa

Wednesday 10 November

Advanced warning systems, epidemic intelligence, and resilience

1400-1405
(UK-GMT)
0900-0905 (EST)
1600-1605 (CAT)

Welcome and session overview

Malebona Precious Matsoso
WITS University

1405-1435
(UK-GMT)
0905-0935 (EST)
1605-1635 (CAT)

1. Keynote remarks

Chair: Malebona Precious Matsoso
WITS University

[INVITED] Hon. Enoch Godongwana
Minister of Finance

Chikwe Ihekweazu
WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence

1435-1535
(UK - GMT)
0935-1035 (EST)
1635-1735 (CAT)

2. Building and maintaining disease information systems

This roundtable discussion will examine recent advances in real-time active disease surveillance systems and highlight the need for strong collaboration across the continent. Drawing upon experience and training, panellists should highlight the importance of developing advanced warning systems and integrating them into the health system writ large.

Chair: Chikwe Ihekweazu
WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence

Amanda McClelland
Resolve to Save Lives

Dylan George
US Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Sam Scarpino
Rockefeller Foundation

Kamran Khan
Blue Dot

Rasmus Bech Hansen
Airfinity

Tariro Makadzange
Stanford University and Charles River Medical Center, Harare

1535-1625
(UK-GMT)
1035-1125 (EST)
1735-1825 (CAT)

3. Importance of local collaboration and health security

This session will bring together community rooted leaders from South Africa to highlight the need for strong, robust collaboration as part of health security efforts. The discussion should incorporate themes such as community trust, national data systems, community

epidemiology training, and whole-of-society approaches to ensuring health security.

Chair: Tariro Makadzange

Stanford University and Charles River Medical Center, Harare

Lul Riek

Africa CDC Southern RCC (Zambia)

Keith Cloete

Western Cape Department of Health

Janan Dietrich

University of the Witwatersrand

Moetapele Letshwenyo

OIE (South Africa)

1625-1645
(UK-GMT)
1125-1145 (EST)
1825-1845 (CAT)

4. Closing remarks

[INVITED] Hon. Zwelivelile Mandela

MP Chair: PC on Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

Natalie Mayet

National Institute for Communicable Diseases (South Africa)

Thursday 11 November

Innovations in pandemic response countermeasures and the bioeconomy

1400-1405
(UK – GMT)
0900-0905 (EST)
1600-1605 (CAT)
1700-1705 (EAT)

Welcome and session overview

Isabella Ayagah

Ministry of Health, Kenya

1405-1430
(UK-GMT)
0905-0930 (EST)
1605-1630 (CAT)
1705-1730 (EAT)

1. Keynote remarks

Chair: Isabella Ayagah

Ministry of Health, Kenya

Trevor Mundel – via video

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Melanie Saville

Coalition for Epidemic Prevention Innovation (CEPI)

1430-1515
(UK-GMT)
0930-1015 (EST)
1630-1715 (CAT)
1730-1815 (EAT)

2. Developing a robust bioeconomy

This panel will provide leaders in the bioeconomy and medical countermeasures space to present on their work, highlighting key advances necessary for Africa to prevent, detect, and respond to emerging disease threats.

Chair: Glenda Gray

SA Medical Research Council

Julius Ecuru

BioInnovate Africa

Vuyisile Phehane

SA Technology Innovation Agency

Stavros Nicolaou

Aspen Pharmacare, South Africa

1515-1600
(UK-GMT)
1015-1100 (EST)
1715-1800 (CAT)
1815-1900 (EAT)

Joshua Nott
Schmidt Futures

3. Responsible innovation and good scientific practice

This panel will discuss the importance of responsible innovation and good scientific practises and habits to prevent accidents or deliberate misuse which could negatively impact progress.

Chair: Iqbal Parker
Emeritus, University of Cape Town

Rachel Chikwamba
Biosciences Unit, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa

Morena Makhoana
Biovac, South Africa

Otim Geoffrey
SynBio Africa, Uganda

4. Closing remarks

[INVITED] Hon. Ebrahim Patel
MP, Minister of Trade Industry and Competition, South Africa

1600-1615
(UK-GMT)
1100-1115 (EST)
1800-1815 (CAT)
1900-1915 (EAT)

Friday 12 November

Non-proliferation

1400-1405
(UK-GMT)
0900-0905 (EST)
1600-1605 (CAT)

Welcome and session overview

James Harrison
Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom

1405-1435
(UK-GMT)
0905-0935 (EST)
1605-1635 (CAT)

1. Keynote remarks

Chair: James Harrison
Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom

HE Cleopa K. Mailu
Kenyan Ambassador to the UN Geneva. Chairperson of the BWC Meeting of State Parties

[INVITED] Hon. Thandi Modise
MP, Minister of Defense and Military Veterans, South Africa

1435-1525
(UK-GMT)
0935-1025 (EST)
1635-1725 (CAT)

2. Roundtable discussion

The panel will bring together members of the non-proliferation community, highlighting the overlapping challenges of laboratory system strengthening, bioeconomy growth, and the resulting security concerns. Discussion will highlight the role global systems play in mitigating potential risks but balance the need for economic and technological development.

Chair: Youssef Cherif
Columbia University Global Center, Tunisia

Daniel Feakes
BWC ISU

1525-1600
(UK-GMT)
1025-1100 (EST)
1725-1800 (CAT)

1600-1615 (GMT)
1100-1115 (EST)
1800-1815 (CAT)

Melanie Reddiar

Department of Trade Industry and Competition (DTIC), South Africa

[INVITED] Hon. Juan Ramon de la Fuente Ramirez

Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mexico and 1540 Coordinator

3. Call to action: taking steps to a better future

This session will focus on bringing the various constituencies together to highlight concrete steps that can be taken in collaboration based upon the information learned over the conference series. Priority should be given to legislative and community actions to ensure there is concrete and lasting support for biosafety and biosecurity in South Africa with a keen eye toward rapid domestication and implementation of the Africa CDC's Biosafety and Biosecurity Initiative. However, commitments can (and should) go beyond this as needed.

Chair: Wilmot James

Columbia University and University of the Witwatersrand

Boemo Mmandu Sekgoma

SADC PF

Hon. Beatrice Epaye

Chair- Foreign Relations Committee, Central African Republic

Peter Barcroft

Parliamentarians for Global Action

David Harper

Chatham House

4. Closing remarks

Hon. Pravin Gordhan

MP, Minister of State Enterprises, South Africa

This is a preview programme and as such may be subject to change.

This is an invitation only conference.

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