



### 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)**

## **Welcome and session overview**

**Issa Makumbi**  
Uganda PHEOC

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

## **1. Keynote remarks**

**Ahmed Ogwell Ouma**  
Africa CDC

**Sacha Wallace-Sankarsingh**  
Caribbean Public Health Agency

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

## **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)

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

## **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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