



Open Briefing

Introduction to the 78th World Health Assembly *Critical Perspectives on Multilateralism in Global Health in 2025*

Sunday, May 18, 2025, 11:30-13:30 CEST with reception following
In person at the Ivan Pictet Auditorium, Geneva Graduate Institute and live streamed on YouTube

SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES

Opening Remarks

Marie-Laure Salles

Director, Geneva Graduate Institute



Marie-Laure Salles became Director of the Geneva Graduate Institute in September 2020. Before joining the Institute, she was Dean of the School of Management and Innovation at Sciences Po Paris, a school she launched in 2016. Before that, she was Professor at ESSEC Business School, where she was also, in turn, Dean of the Faculty and Associate Dean for the PhD Programme.

With a PhD in Sociology from Harvard University and a *habilitation à diriger les recherches* from Dauphine University in Paris, Marie-Laure Salles was, until her arrival in Geneva, Professor at the Centre de sociologie des organisations (CSO) at Sciences Po Paris. Her research interests range from the role of social networks in the transnational diffusion of rules, practices and ideas, to the historical transformation of capitalism and national institutions, with a particular interest for the evolving nature of the social responsibility of firms and for the changing conditions of transnational dynamics of economic governance in the context of globalisation. She has published broadly on those issues in top academic journals and books, and has received several awards, including the prestigious Max Weber Award for Distinguished Scholarship from the American Sociological Association in 2000.

Marie-Laure Salles has been a visiting professor in prestigious academic institutions in the United States and Europe. She holds a PhD *honoris causa* from Stockholm University and was made a Knight in the Legion of Honour by the French Government in 2017.

Cecilia Mundaca Shah

Vice President for Global Health Strategy, United Nations Foundation



Dr. Cecilia Mundaca Shah, Vice President of Global Health Strategy, is a recognized global health expert with extensive experience in health security, pandemic preparedness, and international health policy. With a career spanning leadership roles at the United Nations Foundation, National Academy of Medicine (NAM), and the G20 High-Level Independent Panel on Financing the Global Commons for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, she has been instrumental in shaping strategies for global health security, infectious disease surveillance, health systems strengthening, and the integration of displaced populations into global malaria programs.

At the UN Foundation, Dr. Shah leads policy and advocacy efforts across key global health priorities, including pandemic preparedness, antimicrobial resistance, immunization, and migrant health. She oversees high-level partnerships with UN organizations and global health initiatives, providing strategic leadership to advance global health goals. Previously, Dr. Shah directed key international initiatives at the NAM, including the Global Roadmap for Healthy Longevity, and served as special advisor to the NAM President during the COVID-19 pandemic. She has played a pivotal role in securing multi-million-dollar funding to support global health initiatives and foster cross-sector collaborations. An accomplished speaker and writer, she has contributed to numerous policy publications and has represented her organizations at major global convenings. She is committed to fostering collective action in global health, strengthening partnerships across sectors, and driving impactful solutions that promote health equity worldwide.

Dr. Shah holds a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) and Master of Public Health (MPH) from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, as well as a Medical Doctor (MD) degree from Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Peru.

WHA78 Modalities & Priority Issues and Pandemic Accord Update

Gian Luca Burci

Adjunct Professor of International Law, Geneva Graduate Institute



Gian Luca Burci is Adjunct Professor of international law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva since 2012. He is also the Director of the joint LLM on Global Health Law and Governance between the Graduate Institute and Georgetown Law School, as well as Academic Adviser in the Global Health Centre of the Graduate Institute. Since 2016, Prof. Burci is Visiting Professor and Senior Scholar at the O'Neill Center on National and Global Health Law, Georgetown University School of Law. He previously worked in the Department of International Cooperation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (1998-1999). During his service in WHO, he was involved in the negotiation and implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the revision and implementation of the International Health Regulations, WHO's response to the 2009-2010

H1N1 influenza pandemic and the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak as well as the institutional aspects of WHO reform.

Prof. Burci holds a postgraduate degree in law from the University of Genova, Italy. His areas of expertise are public international law, the law and practice of international organizations as well as global health governance and law.

Prioritization process for the Programme and budget 2026–2027

Jeremy Farrar

Chief Scientist, World Health Organization



Jeremy Farrar has been the Chief Scientist at the WHO since May 2023. In that role he helps ensure WHO is committed to science and evidence and that innovation and high-quality health products, policies and services are available equitably to everyone, everywhere.

Jeremy is a clinician scientist who before joining the WHO was between 2013-2023 Director of the Wellcome Trust. Between 1996-2013 he was Director of the Clinical Research Unit Hospital for Tropical Diseases in Ho Chi Minh City Viet Nam. Dr Farrar trained in neurology and infectious diseases in London, Edinburgh, Oxford and in Melbourne. He has a PhD in Immunology from the University of Oxford in partnership with the University of California in San Francisco and has over 600 publications. He is a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences UK, the National

Academies USA, the European Molecular Biology Organization and a Fellow of The Royal Society.

He was named 12th in the Fortune list of 50 World's Greatest Leaders in 2015, included in the Politico's Class of 2022 most influential people in Europe. He was awarded the Memorial Medal and Ho Chi Minh City Medal in Viet Nam and in 2018 the President Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Humanitarian of the Year. Jeremy was knighted in the Queen's 2018 New Year Honours for services to Global Health and was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun and Gold Ray Neck Ribbon in 2020 from the Japanese government in the name of the Emperor of Japan for contributions to global health. In 2024 Jeremy was named in the Time100 list of 100 most influential leaders in health.

Moderated Discussion: WHO governance and financing: A changing global health landscape

Moderator:

Cecilia Mundaca Shah

Vice President for Global Health Strategy, UNF

Speakers

Joy Phumaphi

Executive Secretary of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA).



Joy Phumaphi is a former Minister of Health of Botswana; former Assistant Director General at WHO; and Former Vice President & Head of Human Development Network at the World Bank. She chairs the Botswana National Gender Commission and is Board Chair of the Roll back Malaria Partnership to End Malaria. She is co-Chair of the Global Pandemic Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB), and the Lancet pathfinder commission on climate change and health. She sits on the boards of the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and the Partnership on Maternal, Newborn Child and Adolescent Health (PMNCH). She co-chaired the United Nations (UN) Secretary General's Independent Accountability Panel for Every Woman, Every Child, Every Adolescent.

Björn Kümmel

Deputy Head of Unit, Global Health, German Federal Ministry of Health



Björn Kümmel is the Deputy Head of Unit Global Health in the German Federal Ministry of Health. He covers WHO in general and in particular WHO reform, WHO's emergency reform as well as WHO's administrative, budgetary and staff issues. Part of his work is attending the governing body meetings of WHO such as the World Health Assembly, the Executive Board and representing Germany in WHO's Programme, Budget and Administrative Committee. He is also responsible for increasing policy coherence among relevant German actors in the field of global health. In this regard, he coordinated the Federal Government's concept paper on global health. From 2007-2010 he worked on the General European Health Policy Planning and from 2005-2007 he was part of the Task Force for the German EU Presidency. A lawyer by training, he completed his studies in Berlin, Padova and Sydney, and holds an LLM in International Law from the University of Cape Town.

Suwit Wibulpolprasert

Senior Adviser, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand



Dr Suwit Wibulpolprasert is a public health specialist, administrator and policy advocate at national and global level. He began his career as a Director and practitioner in rural areas and has various technical and administrative experience in Thai FDA, Bureau of Health Policy and Plan, and as a Deputy Permanent Secretary and a senior expert in Health Economics and Disease Control. He served as an advisor to the Ministry of Public Health on Global Health until October 2024.

Dr Suwit has been proactively working in the public health area for more than 3 decades from the grass root to the highest policy levels. In parallel, he has been working with the science sector in various areas including reform of the science sector (legal frameworks and restructuring of Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation), drug including vaccine and medical device development along the value chain. Apart from his contribution in public health and R&D in Thailand, he is one of global health leaders who is well-known in the public eye as the forefront fighter to protect the benefit of the developing countries and the poor.

At present, Dr Suwit is the Health Service Standard and Quality Control Committee of the National Health Security Office (NHSO), the National Nanotechnology Center (NANOTEC), the Chair of the Committee for Yothi Health Innovation District Development, the Board Member of National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), and Chair of the Subcommittee for Development of the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM Subcommittee). Dr Suwit is also the Vice Chair of the International Health Policy Program Foundation (IHPF) and the Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Foundation (HITAF).

Dr Suwit always reiterates the importance of the real actions "no research without action, no action without research" and believes that the R&D would help our society to be more equitable, inclusive and fair.

Ilona Kickbusch

Founder and Chair, International Advisory Board, Global Health Centre, Geneva Graduate Institute



Professor Ilona Kickbusch is the Founder of the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute in Geneva. Her areas of expertise include the political determinants of health, health in all policies and global health. She advises countries on their global health strategies, trains health specialists and diplomats, and is regularly involved in G7, G20 and EU health activities.

She publishes widely and serves on various commissions and boards. Ilona is a member of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board and chaired the Lancet and Financial Times Commission on "Governing health futures 2030: growing up in a digital world". She now directs the Digital Transformations for Health LAB. She was also a member of the WHO Global Council on the Economics of Health for All. During her distinguished career with the WHO she was a key instigator of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and WHO's Healthy Cities Network and has remained a leader in this field. She was the Director of the Global Health Division at Yale University School of Public Health and responsible for the first major Fulbright Programme on global health. She is co-chair of the Council of the World Health Summit.

Closing Remarks

Vinh-Kim Nguyen

Co-Director, Global Health Centre, Geneva Graduate Institute



Vinh-Kim Nguyen is a family physician from Montreal who also practises in the Canadian Arctic. He has also worked in acute care settings in hospitals in Geneva and Paris and during humanitarian crises in the DRC and Guinea (during Ebola outbreaks) and in Yemen (during the ongoing conflict). He also led the development and opening of covid treatment units in hospitals in Geneva and Montreal in 2020. As a result, he has a broad experience in pandemic management. He is also an anthropologist: Nguyen's award-winning first book examines the introduction of antiretroviral therapy in West Africa and his second, co-authored with Margaret Lock, is a landmark treatise on the anthropology of biomedicine. He has recently led research projects examining how conflict drives antimicrobial resistance and, most recently, the financialization of pharmaceuticals. Trained in psychedelic therapy, his latest research examines the "psychedelic renaissance" in Switzerland and beyond.