

INB 13

Statement by Third World Network made on 19 February 2024

Thank you Co-chair,

On February 29, 2024, 290 scientists urged INB with an open letter to establish an equitable PABS system—ensuring scientific contributions lead to community access to lifesaving advancements. They called upon WHO to create a transparent repository for genetic data and samples to guarantee continued access and transparent management.

Recent political shifts in the U.S. and related events highlight the need for truly multilateral data governance—not only to prevent inequitable extraction and misuse but also to ensure uninterrupted open science.

On September 16, 2024, 94 CSOs, including TWN, called for a PABS system guaranteeing certainty in benefit-sharing—covering VTDs for PHEICs and pre-PHEIC stages, manufacturing licenses, and monetary contributions. Operationalizing UNESCO's Open Science Recommendation principles for data governance the letter demanded that PABS system must be WHO-administered under Party oversight, free from conflicts of interest.

Yesterday, 110 CSOs wrote another letter urging delegations in this room to lead in securing these demands, recalling the unconscionable inequities of COVID-19, Ebola, and Mpox. WHO barely secured 1% of total Mpox vaccine production, even after purchasing at high prices. A study shows redistributing 35% of monthly doses is essential for achieving objectives of PA.

Madam Co-Chair, scientists and CSOs stand united: We are convinced that VTD set-asides are needed not only for pandemics but also for early outbreak stages. We know that accountable databases and laboratory networks can and must be built - it's not a question of practicality, but political will. We wonder whose interests are being prioritized by those delegations doubting PABS governance in the name of protecting science.

We wish INB could rise to the occasion today, and secure an fair and equitable PABS system.