Dear colleagues,

It is an honor to address you as chair of the Steering Group of the Global Health Security Agenda, the GHSA.

The GHSA represents over seventy member states, important international organizations and non-governmental and private sector members.

Our common aim is as simple as it is difficult: we want to improve the worldwide implementation of the WHO International Health Regulations. That’s easy said, but we all know it’s not easy getting it done. But what we know is this: it is our crucial global tool when it comes to preparing ourselves against outbreaks of infectious diseases such as Covid-nineteen.

The situation we all find ourselves in today, with lockdowns, overflowing ICU’s, and our economies suffering, proves that an effective implementation of the international health regulations is more important than ever.

The members of the GHSA work from the principle that solidarity and cooperation are key. And we do this from a One Health perspective, as human, animal, and environmental health are complexly linked, as the current zoonotic pandemic so clearly illustrates.

It is our common aim to bolster pandemic preparedness and response capacities in countries by spurring political commitments and action.

By engaging the range of sectors with equities in health security.

And by drawing on expertise from across our diverse membership. We share knowledge and good practices widely.

While all of us know that the best way to deal with this crisis is to stay at home, we also know that the only road out of this mess, is the road on which we walk together. For this the GHSA calls on everybody to commit to specific, focused, and concrete actions now, so the world will be better prepared to brave the next outbreak in the future.

I thank you.