UNITE would like to thank all members of parliament who commit to improving the health and wellbeing of their citizens and take time from their heavy schedules to work together for a common global health agenda. UNITE relies on their engagement and work, and at the secretariat we are very grateful to work with a dynamic group of global health champions, expressing ideas, initiatives and strong will to help the communities they serve.

In particular, we would like to thank our board members, Hon Gisela Scaglia (Argentina), Hon Mariam Jashi (Georgia), Hon Andrew Ullmann (Germany), Hon Akua Dansua (Ghana), Hon Amar Patnaik (India), Hon Esther Passaris (Kenya), Hon Ibtissame Azzaoui (Morocco), Honorable Pia Cayetano (The Philippines), and our President, Hon Ricardo Baptista Leite, MD, MP, for their guidance and support in the development of UNITE’s 2022-2025 strategic plan, as well as our overall activities within this enriching year.

UNITE Secretariat would like to also thank all partners and organizations, including from civil society, who contributed to this year’s activities, allowing the network to grow exponentially and reach higher and measurable impact worldwide. Thank you for your continued and strong support to UNITE and its members!

We would also like to thank all frontline and community workers for their tireless efforts towards ensuring that everyone, everywhere, has access to the highest standards of health.
Message of the President of the Board
Dear members of parliament, partners, and colleagues,

The year of 2022 marked the fifth anniversary of UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health. This important milestone in our history coincides with a period of great uncertainty, fragility, and challenges across the world.

At the time of writing, we are facing unprecedented security threats adding up to a still on-going sanitary crisis that has put our societies through high pressure and uncertainty, mirroring the fragilities and instabilities of our health systems, but not only.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 will require heroic and imaginative efforts, determination to learn about what works best, and agility to adapt to new information and changing trends, while acknowledging that the pandemic has set back the fight against many diseases by years.

In this context, there is a need for new partnerships, innovative ways of thinking, and renewed funding to get back on track and achieve the promise of the SDGs. Members of parliament play an important role in this agenda, as they can advocate for more efforts and investments, while holding governments accountable. Simultaneously, they are key actors in the much-needed multilateral response.

I believe UNITE also plays an important role in this global movement, and has shown it throughout 2022, revealing the full potential and outreach of its network.

The year of 2022 was indeed a year of growth and development for UNITE, pathed with milestones such as the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding with the World Health Organization, UNITE’s first regional meeting in Argentina, in-person Global Board meeting in Rabat and 3rd Global Summit edition, among others.

Through the participation and engagement of our members, key partners, civil society organizations and patient advocates, we have developed an ambitious set of campaigns and projects, and I take great pride in presenting you UNITE’s Activities report for 2022, summarizing the highlights and outcomes of this year of hard work.

Thank you to all our members carrying UNITE’s work in their countries and to our partners supporting us. I look forward to collaborating with you in 2023 and build together the next generation of political leaders in global health!

It’s time to UNITE!

Ricardo Baptista Leite, MD, MP
Mission, vision, and values
UNITE is a non-profit, non-partisan, global network of current and former members of parliament from multinational, national, state, and regional Parliaments, Congresses, and Senates, committed towards the promotion of efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems, in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNITE's policy priorities focus on three cross-cutting areas, namely, human rights and equitable access to health, health systems strengthening, and global health architecture and security, placing UNITE as the only network of parliamentarians from around the world currently focusing on the global health agenda.

UNITE's vision is to enable:
- Members of Parliaments, Congresses, and Senates, to advocate and drive change at national, regional, and global level, towards the promotion of efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems.
- Mutual dialogue, cooperation and learning across the global network to raise global health in the political agenda and enable members to respond and adapt to the main challenges of today and tomorrow.
- Partnerships across the global health sector to maximize UNITE members’ impact, in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

INSPIRE parliamentarians, community, and civil society representatives, affected populations, researchers, academia, government officials, and all relevant stakeholders, to act and take part in the global advocacy efforts towards promoting efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems.

CONNECT parliamentarians with community and civil society representatives, affected populations, researchers, academia, government officials, and all relevant stakeholders, to maximize advocacy impact towards promoting efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems.

EMPOWER parliamentarians, community, and civil society representatives, affected populations, researchers, academia, government officials, and all relevant stakeholders, to enable all actors and give them the right advocacy tools to act towards promoting efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems.

UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health rejects all forms of violation of human rights, stigma, and discrimination.
A year in figures
Over the past year, UNITE has grown its membership rapidly to:

285 MEMBERS
(+42% since January 2021)

IN 90 COUNTRIES
(+22% since January 2021)

UNITE MP Network growth since its creation

UNITE MP Network around the world

Network expansion in 2021
Network in 2022
We have seen an exponential growth of the network within the last months, due to the multiplication of events and partnerships built at the national and international level. These events and activities include:

**Hosting**

- 20 high-level meetings with parliamentarians, in 4 different continents

**Participating in**

- More than 50 events as speakers or contributors all around the world

Organizing the **UNITe Global Summit 3rd Edition** on December 6th, 7th and 8th with more than 400 registrations, 70 policymakers and 65 speakers engaged during the 3 days

- 65 speakers
- 15 sessions
- +400 participants
- 30 in-person MPs
- 70 policymakers
- 52% / 48% male / female speakers
UNITE’s impact at global, national, and regional level

AT GLOBAL LEVEL

Connecting +100 Partners and CSO representatives with MPs from all regions

Providing inputs as a relevant stakeholder in the negotiation process around the WHO international instrument for PPPR

Linking 12 parliamentary networks with the IFGH

Collaborating with 5 global health subcommittees and informal working groups on health and development worldwide

AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

Creation of the HIV informal group of members of the European Parliament

5 members of UNITE sponsored or co-wrote bill proposals in the field of Drug Policy & Infectious Diseases in 2022

Developing and supporting Digital Health political action plans in 3 countries
UNITE resumed its activities in January 2022 by launching both its Global Summit report and Annual report, while finalizing the edition of the soon to be published Summit podcast.

Later in the month, on January 25th, UNITE co-organized with the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), a regional parliamentary roundtable on the need for efficient cooperation towards building stronger health systems in Western and Central Europe. The event, moderated by Eloise Todd, Co-founder of the Pandemic Action Network, counted with the participation of Frederik Kristensen, Deputy CEO from CEPI, Jeffrey Lazarus, Head of the Health Systems Research Group at IS Global, and was attended by 11 policymakers from European countries such as France, Lithuania, Spain, Norway, and the UK, among others. Members attending strongly supported CEPI’s efforts in mobilizing resources for research and development for vaccines and committed to advocate for more enhanced cooperation towards building stronger health systems in the region.

Still in January, two new members from Spain and Tanzania joined the network, opening the way to more than 70 new members throughout 2022.

February 2022 marked UNITE’s fifth anniversary and started off with the launching of the first episode of **UNITE’s 2021 Global Summit podcast**.
A few days later, and ahead of the Africa-Europe Week, UNITE, UNAIDS, the European Parliament, the Pan-African Parliament, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) co-hosted a virtual session on the role of parliamentarians to end inequalities for ending AIDS, COVID and preparing for future pandemics, counting with the presence of UNITE members from Europe, Africa, and Latin America.

Later on, UNITE’s members achieved a crucial milestone by launching the Informal Working Group on HIV at the European Parliament, in partnership with the International Aids Society (IAS). The launching event and overall discussion aimed at presenting the scope, mission, and objectives of the group and to define its main priority areas of work - pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response; investment in HIV prevention; and stigma and discrimination. The group was established with 9 Members of the European Parliament from Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, and Spain.

In the same week, UNITE in collaboration with Harm Reduction International (HRI), co-hosted an informal briefing with members of Parliament from Malaysia on the need to advocate for a pandemic convention with a focus on safeguarding human rights in times of pandemics.

Finally, by the end of February, members of UNITE from Kenya and Senegal joined forces with politicians from the four host nations of the Global Fund Preparatory meeting to call on the UK to help deliver all necessary resources to effectively fight and end AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and renew partnerships for an efficient global health response.

Following the beginning of the war in Ukraine, UNITE’s board members combined their voices in a joint statement calling on parliamentarians to step up to reduce the impact of the war on the health and wellbeing of the people from Ukraine.

A few days later, the UNITE Global Board also met online with the secretariat for the first Global Board meeting of the year, to discuss the strategy and proposed workplan of activities for 2022.

On March 18th, the Parliament of Zimbabwe took the decision to repeal the law that criminalizes HIV’s transmission. Parliamentarian’s action across the world is critical to foster more equitable and inclusive policies for health. UNITE has currently 23 members in Zimbabwe, working every day to improve their citizen’s health and wellbeing.

Still in March, the President of AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), Michael Weinstein, and Ricardo Baptista Leite, UNITE’s President, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), defining main priorities and activities in collaboration between both organizations for 2022.
April was marked by UNITE’s first in-person regional meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina. For 2 days, parliamentarians from Latin America and the Caribbean were gathered to discuss main global health challenges in the region, including pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, modernization of health systems, and human rights safeguarding. Parliamentarians had the opportunity to share experiences with academia - Universidad Buenos Aires and Universidad Austral - and representatives from international organizations and local civil society namely, AHF, CEPI, UNAIDS, PAHO, PGPHC, UHC2030, YouthRise, Intercambios Asociación Civil, Plapert, and RECAINSA Network. This important milestone was consolidated by the signature of the first declaration of intent of UNITE LATAM’s chapter.

Following the regional meeting in Buenos Aires, Universidad Austral co-hosted a 2-day workshop in Villa La Angostura, Neuquén, with a particular focus on parliamentary diplomacy in the face of the 21st century’s challenges. UNITE’s members participated by hosting a session on the role of Parliamentarians combatting COVID-19 and infectious diseases. This was an additional opportunity for the network to develop and consolidate its work in the region, setting a very solid ground for projects to come in the region in 2022.

During World Health Day, on April 7th, several members of the network participated and joined advocacy campaigns, such as the Health Data Principles campaign, in collaboration with Transform Health.

Still in April, the International Forum on Global Health (IFGH) hosted a parliamentary roundtable addressing the essential principles and financing mechanisms
for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. The session was co-organized with the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and IMF, the Global Fund, and the Panel for a Global Public Health Convention, at the margins of the Spring meetings of the World Bank & IMF. The event counted with the participation of more than 50 policymakers from 25 countries and facilitated a fruitful platform of debate for renewed and innovative health systems financing mechanisms. The call to action launched by parliamentarians is available [here](#).

April 13th: The Role of Parliamentarians to promote pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and financing for resilient and sustainable systems for health

At the end of the month, UNITE and the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Drug Policy reform, convened the first Steering Committee of the Drug Policy Desk for 2022. Discussions revolved around the workplan in the four priority countries of the desk, Portugal, Morocco, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, as well identifying potential windows of opportunity to extend the work in other regions of interest.

April 29th: UNITE/APPG Drug Policy Desk was gathered for its first Steering Committee Meeting

Following the release of UNITE’s special address on the War in Ukraine in March, UNITE met with Ukrainian members of parliament, the Global Fund and other civil society organizations, at the beginning of May, to share thoughts and ideas on how UNITE and partners could support members of Parliament and citizens in Ukraine facing the humanitarian and global health crisis.

Beginning of May: UNITE met with Ukrainian Members of Parliament, CSOs and relevant stakeholders
Later in May, Hon. Gisela Scaglia, MPA from Argentina and UNITE’s Chapter Chair for Latin America and the Caribbean, moderated a round table focusing on health and resilience in the Americas, as part of a cycle of parliamentary talks organized by the Escuela de Gobierno of Universidad Austral. Also present were UNITE members Hon. Marta Bravo Salinas (Chile), Hon. Éctor Jaime Ramírez Barba (Mexico) as well as Dr. Miguel Pedrola, Director Scientist for Latin America and the Caribbean at AHF.

A few days later, UNITE gathered a delegation of members on a field trip to Geneva during the week of the 75th World Health Assembly (WHA). Hon. Luis Sambo (Angola), Hon. Morgana Daniele (Lithuania), Hon. Neema Lugangira (Tanzania) and Hon. Philippa Whitford (the UK) were able to participate in side-events and gatherings, follow the WHA sessions and meet with country delegations and missions, in order to understand and discuss the way forward to respond to pressing global health challenges. Members of the delegation also met with several organizations based in Geneva, such as UNITAID, Transform Health, the Joep Lange Institute, the Global Fund, GAVI, the World Health Organization (WHO), HRI, IAS, the Graduate Institute, GARDP, UHC 2030 - and other organizations such as Save the Children (UK), the Global Financing Facility, and the Global Commission on Drug Policy.

During the WHA, UNITE, together with Transform Health, Fondation Botnar, FIND, PATH, PharmAccess Foundation and, PMNCH, co-organized a side event exploring the rapid need for a health data governance global framework. Hon Neema Lugangira, also part of the delegation, gave remarks and took part in the panel discussions of the roundtable.
The very next day, UNITE network organized another side-event to the WHA to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women’s rights and the role of parliamentarians in advocating for the inclusion of human rights and gender equality approaches in the pandemic convention. Hon Gabriela Cuevas, Co-chair of UHC 2030 moderated the discussion that featured presentations from Dr. Jorge Saavedra, Executive director at the AHF Global Public Health Institute, Naomi Burke-Shyne, Executive director at Harm Reduction International (HRI), and Shirin Heidari, Senior researcher at the Geneva Graduate Institute and Founding President of GENDRO. Several members of UNITE from Argentina, Bangladesh, Georgia, Ghana, India, Mexico, the UK, and Zimbabwe among others, attended and actively participated to the parliamentary roundtable.

In parallel to UNITE’s engagement at the WHA, Hon Mariam Jashi, Chapter Chair for the EECA region, was in Davos representing UNITE in a panel session entitled “An SDG Target We Can Reach: Financing Viral Hepatitis Elimination”.

On May 31st, a group of MPs in the Lithuanian Seimas, including UNITE Member Hon. Morgana Daniele, introduced new amendments to decriminalize possession of small quantities of cannabis its parts, oil, resin, extracts, or tinctures, without the intention of distribution.

Starting off June, UNITE hosted its first in-person Global Board meeting which took place in Rabat, Morocco, on June 5th and 6th. This two-day meeting aimed at discussing UNITE’s strategy for the 2022-2025 period. Parliamentarians had the occasion to meet with different partners and civil society organizations, such as WHO, PGPHC, HRI, the Open Society Foundations (OSF), Transform Health, the Global Fund, AHF, and UNAIDS, and to adopt UNITE’s Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 with its Declaration of Intent attached. It was also during this meeting that the Board voted
to broaden the scope of UNITE’s activity from an initial focus on infectious diseases to tackling global health challenges at large.

Still during the same meeting, UNITE officially launched its Digital Health policy desk, ensuring a clear direction at the policymaking level on digital transformation, attainment of healthy lives & well-being, and global health equity. Alongside key multi-stakeholder partners, UNITE will implement this vision through political action plans in priority countries, across regions of focus including Latin America, Eastern and Southern Africa and Asia Pacific.

Following the discussions at the regional meeting in Argentina in April, Honorable Pastor Vera, member of UNITE, worked on a law proposal on drug education in schools, and discussed it with Adrià Cots Fernández, from the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC). Following this meeting, Hon. Pastor Vera summarized the goals of the "Support. Don't Punish" campaign and invited other parliamentarians at the Chamber of Deputies in Asunción (Paraguay), to advocate for stigma-free drug policies and legislation that do not punish victims but instead prioritize prevention, public health, and human rights.

Following the launch of the working group on HIV at the European Parliament together with IAS in March, UNITE’s parliamentary engagement team was in Brussels in June for a series of meetings to kick off the work with members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) working on HIV and AIDS at the European level, to better understand their priorities in the fight against HIV, which include investment in R&D for HIV prevention and treatment, pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response, gender equality, LGBTI+ rights, quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS and harm reduction, among others.

By the end of June, and ahead of the International Day to Fight Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse, UNITE members Hon Ricardo Baptista Leite (Portugal), Hon Morgana
Daniele (Lithuania), and Hon Alex Agius Saliba (MEP) spoke at a roundtable discussion about the current state of national and regional reform initiatives towards evidence-based cannabis regulation rooted in public health and human rights. The event was co-organized by EUMANS, Meglio Legale, Science for Democracy and Associazione Luca Coscioni.

June 23rd: “European Way for Legal Cannabis” webinar, part of the one-day festival in Italy about Cannabis legalization “Un Giorno Legale”

It was with great honor that, in July 2022, UNITE was officially recognized in the list of organizations to be consulted within the drafting process of the Pandemic Accord, meaning UNITE would be invited in the foreseeable future to the different International Negotiating Body (INB) meetings to provide comments and suggestions, representing the views of its network of parliamentarians. UNITE was nominated as a relevant stakeholder by the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva.

Early in the month, UNITE Member Hon Philippa Whitford hosted a session in the UK Parliament to support the efforts of a successful Global Fund’s Seventh Replenishment. Parliamentarians from different parties joined this meeting to discuss the need to mobilize resources in the fight against HIV, AIDS, and TB, together with other organizations such as Results UK, STOPAIDS, and Malaria no More.

July 6th: Session at the UK Parliament on the Global Fund’s Seventh Replenishment

On July 14th, and within the program of the EuroScience Open Forum, UNITE’s President, Hon Ricardo Baptista Leite took part in a panel discussion of elected politicians, leaders of global funding and public health institutions, policy-change experts, medical doctors, pioneering researchers and activists. Hon Ricardo Baptista Leite could contribute with the Portuguese example, highlighting the public health improvements over the past 20 years since Portugal moved away from a punitive
drug policy, as well as the key role of parliamentarians globally to make sure policies are based on science, data, and evidence.

On July 20th, UNITE hosted a meeting at the Portuguese Parliament with MPs from Mozambique to discuss supporting their work towards the application of policies that can help achieving the HIV 90-90-90 targets. As a clear action of commitment, the Parliament of Mozambique created a working group to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the country. Within the same week, UNITE also met with the WHO, and the Chair of the Health Committee of the Portuguese Parliament to discuss the overall role of parliamentarians in the global health agenda.

To mark World Hepatitis Day, UNITE collaborated with the World Hepatitis Alliance, on the "I Can't Wait" campaign, by promoting advocacy materials to its members and encouraging them to share them with their networks and constituents.

At the end of the month, UNITE co-organized a side event to the 24th International AIDS Conference together with STOPAIDS, exploring how to harness political leadership to advance the fight to end AIDS by 2030. The event gathered key stakeholders in the HIV response including parliamentarians, people living with HIV and community activists, donors, and Government representatives.
Still in July, UNITE’s President, Hon Ricardo Baptista Leite, spent two weeks in Ukraine on a voluntary mission as a medical doctor, supporting a campaign to collect funds for a Hospital in Lviv, an initiative from the Association of Ukrainians living in Portugal. While in Ukraine, Hon Ricardo Leite also attended several meetings with organizations working in the field, health authorities, and other governmental representatives. Specifically, Hon Ricardo Leite met with the Ukrainian Minister of Health, Hon Viktor Liashko and other members of Parliament in Ukraine, Hon Igor Vasiliev, President of the Ukraine-Portugal Parliamentary Friendship Group, and UNITE member Hon Galyna Mykhailiuk, a member of the Law Enforcement Committee.

Following the advocacy campaign led on World Hepatitis Day, Hon María José Plaza invited UNITE to participate to a weekly meeting of the Right to Health and Sports Commission of Ecuador’s National Assembly, in order to provide parliamentarians and members with updated information on hepatitis control and elimination. Participants included MPs from Ecuador, Hon. Éctor Ramírez Barba and Hon. Sarai Núñez Cerón from Mexico, and Dr. Patricia Vélez-Möller from the World Hepatitis Alliance Guatemala.
Later in August, and following a previous event in collaboration with CEPI, an opinion piece was published on the Health Policy Watch. In this article MPs and MEPs from across Europe make the case for greater funding in CEPI's vaccine programs and their pandemic preparedness plan.

At the beginning of the month, the Steering Committee that will guide UNITE's Digital Health Hub gathered for its kick-off meeting. Parliamentarians and partners from the focus regions shared perspectives from their countries and political landscape regarding the use of Digital Technology in Health.

In September 2022, UNITE was collaborating with two crucial taskforces with global outreach. After being selected as a relevant stakeholder to participate in the negotiations around the future Pandemic Accord, UNITE sent both a written and an oral contribution to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB), which was broadcasted during the official Public Hearings. Secondly, also being selected as a member of the UHC2030 Taskforce, UNITE participated in the reflection on UHC achievements and on the amendment of the 2019 Key Asks, to be proposed at the upcoming UN High-Level meeting in 2023.

It was also in September that, following the vote from the Global Board a few weeks earlier, UNITE officially communicated its new name and mandate, to become UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health.

Later in the month, the International Forum on Global Health (IFGH) hosted a side-event to the 77th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), on the role of parliamentarians in implementing reform towards more cost-efficient policies rooted in public health and human rights. The session started with presentations from the speakers - Norman Loayza, Director of the Global Indicators Group at The World Bank and Marie Nougier, Head of Research and Communications at the IDPC - followed by a roundtable with current and former parliamentarians, to discuss alternative policy approaches to address the world drug problem and what the increment on international and public investment in resilient and inclusive health systems would resemble.
During the first week of October, UNITE met with members of the US House Rules Committee to discuss the lessons learned from COVID-19 and to explore future collaborations in Global Health.

A few days later UNITE, together with Hon Mario Fiad, the Health Observatory of the Faculty of Law, University of Buenos Aires and the Institute of Strategic Studies and International Relations organized a series of multistakeholder discussions on the state, needs and opportunities of digital health in Argentina and Latin America. Following these discussions at the National Congress of Argentina, UNITE committed to support the design and implementation of a political action plan (PAP), led by the Senate of Argentina, to strengthen national and local policy mechanisms to encourage the development, implementation, and governance of digital technologies and innovations for health.

For the World Health Summit 2022, in Berlin, UNITE and the IFGH gathered a delegation of more than 15 members of Parliament, that also participated in several
sessions and meetings with other policymakers, international organizations and partners.

Meetings with partners focused on how international organizations and civil society organizations could support parliamentarians in specific areas and were important to identify new opportunities for collaboration. Parliamentarians met with Unitaid, UHC 2030, and GARDP among others. The delegation also participated to two sessions hosted by the Bundestag Sub-committee on Global Health and the WHO, the first one focusing on investments and sustainable financing for health, whereas the second one addresses the necessary promotion of global health for peace.

Besides the side-events, parliamentarians attended two official sessions from the WHS, the first one being a workshop co-organized by UNITE, the IFGH and the German Health Alliance (GHA) on the importance of including parliamentarians in the development of a Global Pandemic Treaty.

The second session, a plenary, marked the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between the World Health Organization and UNITE, in front of an audience of more than 40 parliamentarians from 30 different countries.

UNITE also signed an MoU with Universidad Austral from Buenos Aires, Argentina, to promote the connection between academia and policymakers with the creation of specific courses. At the end of the month UNITE members, Hon Marta Pilar Bravo Salinas (Chile) and Hon Éctor Jaime Ramírez Barba (Mexico), lectured 2 classes at Universidad Austral about the challenges of parliamentary diplomacy at a global dimension of health.
Still in October, UNITE also took part in the INHSU Policy Day, which focused on innovations for tackling drug related harms, specifically approaches to the implementation of overdose prevention centers (OPCs, also known as drug consumption rooms). A few days later INHSU also hosted the 10th International Conference on Health and Hepatitis in Substance Users, discussing the latest advances in research and practice in public health, epidemiology, hepatitis C, HIV, harm reduction for people who use drugs.

In November, Hon María José Plaza, vice-president of the Commission on the Right to Health and Sport of Ecuador’s National Assembly, invited Hon Saraí Núñes Cerón (Mexico), both members of UNITE, to present her experience working on a national law on mental health in Mexico to 8 parliamentarians and officials from the Ministry of Health.
A week later, UNITE member Hon Benjamin Kalu, Member of the House of Representatives in The Federal Republic of Nigeria, delivered the opening statement at a webinar hosted by the Treatment Action Group (TAG). During his speech, Hon Kalu stressed the need for innovative treatment regimens to tackle longstanding infectious diseases like Malaria, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis and HIV/AIDS and the need to accelerate efforts to embrace and provide the necessary support to long-acting therapies, particularly in Africa.

Still in November, Hon Mariam Jashi, UNITE’s Chapter Chair for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, held a meeting with 5 members of the Health Care and Social Issues Committee at the Parliament of Georgia, to present UNITE’s activities and strategy for the upcoming years, assessing new opportunities for close collaboration with members of Parliament in the country.

A few days later, UNITE represented by Hon. Ibtissame Azaoui, UNITE’s Chapter Chair for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), held a virtual roundtable discussion with current and former parliamentarians of Morocco. The discussions centered around the country’s achievements in implementing the UHC framework and expanding social protections, as well as legislative changes to mitigate discrimination, stigma and inequalities, and measures needed to ensure access to quality essential health-care services.

Later on, UNITE, together with the Zimbabwe Civil Liberties and Drug Network (ZCLDN) also organized a capacity-building workshop for parliamentarians from Zimbabwe, on the need for evidence-based responses to drug use, informed by scientific research, best practices, and respect for human rights of people who use drugs. UNITE Member Hon Daniel Molokele, Hwange Central Member of Parliament, gave the opening remarks, followed by discussions on the Situational Analysis on Drug Use conducted by ZCLDN in 2022, and the legal framework as well as its effects on the responses to drug use in Zimbabwe. Parliamentarians then discussed ways...
forward in drug policy with members of the community of people who use drugs in Harare.

By the end of the month, UNITE also participated in a workshop at the German Bundestag in Berlin organized by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) and Hon Andrew Ullmann, Chapter Chair for Western and Central Europe, around the future international pandemic agreement. The workshop included an insightful presentation by Prof. Haik Nikogosian on the elaboration of the future Pandemic Accord and its relation to the amending process of the International Health Regulations (IHR). UNITE had the opportunity to share its experience and involvement as relevant stakeholder in the negotiations of the future international agreement, alongside other participants, including representatives from AHF.

Following this workshop, and in partnership with The Global Fund, UNITE organized 2 virtual roundtables to discuss the role of parliamentarians in increasing domestic financing for health, both in the Africa and Asia-Pacific regions. Discussions centered around the challenges that governments face in domestic financing for health, capacity building for parliamentarians to advocate for increased budget allocation to health and understanding the impact of the work done by the Global Fund in the respective regions. Altogether the events were attended by parliamentarians and policymakers from India, Nepal and 7 African countries, as well as representatives from The Global Fund and the WHO Liaison Office to the African Union.
Finally, by the end of the month, Juan de Dios Cincunegui from Universidad Austral, invited UNITE members, Hon. Gisela Scaglia (Argentina) and Hon. Éctor Jaime Ramírez Barba (Mexico), to discuss the Pandemic Accord and access to vaccines, in a workshop organized by the World Trade Organization and the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) for parliamentarians from the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

November 28th: “Resultados principales de la CM12: seguridad alimentaria y acceso a las vacunas”

DECEMBER

To celebrate UNITE’s fifth Anniversary the "5 Questions With" podcast was launched in December. This series comprised 5 special episodes, for which 5 Global Health champions from 5 different countries answered 5 questions about central topics of the 2022 edition of the Summit.

A few days after, and for the first time ever, the UNITE Global Summit was hosted in-person, at the Portuguese Parliament, being simultaneously live-streamed on a dedicated platform, and counting with more than 400 registrations. Over the 3 days of the event - December 5th, 6th, and 7th - representants from international organizations, civil society, affected communities and academia were gathered with more than 30 current and former parliamentarians from around the world, to exchange best practices and lessons learned with the aim of tackling collaboratively the global health challenges of today and tomorrow.
The program dedicated each day to one of UNITE's three core strategic priorities. The first on Infectious Diseases and Pandemic Preparedness, with 5 panels hosted by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovations (CEPI), Harm Reduction International (HRI), the Panel for a Global Public Health Convention (PGPHC), UNAIDS, and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The second day focused on the Future of Health Systems, counting with panelists from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA) together with Hepatitis Australia, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), Hepatitis B Foundation, Coalition for Global Hepatitis Elimination (CGHE), and Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

On the third and last day of the Summit main topics discussed revolved around Health as a Human Right in which UHC2030 and Unitaid hosted 2 sessions as did UNITE.

At the end of the day, discussions pursued in a new format, a regional dialogue on Universal Health Coverage, where parliamentarians were gathered by regions to answer a series of questions, having the opportunity afterwards, to present their key findings.

The Summit, hosted by Victoria Grandsoult, Managing Director of the Virchow Foundation for Global Health, came to an end with the closing ceremony in which Hon Akua Dansua read the declaration of Intent of the 2022 edition.
05

Targets for the next cycle
In the course of 2022, UNITE has adopted its strategic plan until 2025, considering the current global health crisis and consequences it has triggered around the world, the network's activity for the 2022-2025 period will take a matrixed approach to global health, working with parliamentarians and partners to accelerate action taken with a focus on three cross-cutting priority areas:

- Human rights and equitable access to health – working to ensure that everyone, everywhere can achieve the highest attainable standard of health, with an emphasis on vulnerable and marginalized populations facing greater difficulties in access to health services. Actions must be taken to prevent a higher burden on these populations with a special focus on women, children, and adolescents' health.
- Strengthening of health systems - supporting the development of modern, agile, and qualitative health systems focused on patient needs and delivering maximum value, capable of generating wellbeing for all and respond to main global health challenges.
- Global Health architecture and security - building robust multilateral cooperation at global and regional level with the aim of equipping health systems to prevent and tackle outbreaks of epidemic diseases and other global health threats.

Based on this approach, UNITE's strategy is built around 4 main pillars aiming to develop a solid and necessary platform for parliamentarians willing to promote efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems worldwide.

1. **A stronger and more integrated network**

   To accelerate change and support parliamentarians’ work to promote efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems, UNITE needs to grow its membership and representation around the world in order to present increased opportunities of networking and experience sharing between members, partners, affected communities and civil society representatives. This improved quantity and quality of experience sharing will drive UNITE’s work in the 2022-2025 period.

2. **A connecting platform for policymakers in global health**

   Beyond growing the network in terms of quantity and quality, it is also important to develop the connections between the network itself and between the network and other partners who are willing to support UNITE’s action and in a position to bring an added value to parliamentarians’ work. This stream of work will focus on the development of the International Forum on Global Health and the increased support of Global Health subcommittees around the world.
3. **A global health policy lab for parliamentarians**

Growing the network and its connectivity goes with growing its added value. UNITE will aim at developing and increasing its production of information and guidance to parliamentarians. More than creating scientific evidence, UNITE will serve as a policy lab where science meets public policy and proposes a series of action plans for parliamentarians who wish to take the agenda forward in their countries.

4. **A driver for policy change**

Combining a stronger and more connected network to a dynamic platform of information gives the right tools for UNITE's members to act, whenever a window of opportunity opens. With that in mind, the last, but not less essential pillar of this strategy focuses on identifying the windows of opportunity for change and communicating them in a timely manner to the right audience. UNITE will act as a conductor for change orchestrating the flow of information and directing it to the people who can implement it the right way.

While establishing these 4 pillars UNITE aims to develop a solid and necessary platform for parliamentarians willing to promote efficient and sustainable policies for improved global health systems worldwide. We are confident that the work we have undertaken so far will persevere and flourish in 2023, for a more sustainable and healthier world, today and tomorrow.