

UNITE

Parliamentarians Network
for Global Health



Join Your **Delegation**

at the 79th **Session**
of the UN General
Assembly

Campaign briefing

UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health



1. What is the Join your Delegation campaign?

“**Join your delegation**” is an advocacy campaign developed by the UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health, with the aim of calling for the **inclusion of Members of Parliament** in the **national delegations** to **global health multilateral fora**.

Parliamentarians are uniquely positioned, through their core roles of law-making, budgeting and oversight, to transform societies, enabling **everyone** to have **access** to the **health services they need**.

By joining the national delegations, parliamentarians can bring attention to national and regional health priorities and perspectives, strengthening their country’s position in international health policy discussions and, thus, making significant **contributions to global health governance**. As Members of Parliament are the representatives of their constituents, they play a critical role in **representing people’s voices and aspirations** within these discussions.

At the same time, back home, parliamentarians have a responsibility to **hold their governments accountable** for the political and financial commitments made during these multilateral discussions.

This year, the campaign focuses on **three key events**:

- **67th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs**, which took place in Vienna, Austria, in March;
- **77th World Health Assembly**, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland, in May;
- **79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**, taking place in New York City, USA, scheduled for September.

2. The 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

2.1. What is the UNGA?

The **General Assembly** of the **United Nations** (UNGA) is the main policy-making organ of the Organization. Comprising all Member States, it provides a unique forum for **multilateral discussion** of the full spectrum of **international issues** covered by the **Charter of the United Nations**. Each of the **193 Member States** of the United Nations has an **equal vote**.

The UNGA also makes key decisions for the UN, including appointing the **Secretary-General** on the recommendation of the **Security Council**, electing the **non-permanent members** of the **Security Council** and **approving the UN budget**.

2.2. How are the UNGA sessions structured and who attends?

The Assembly meets in regular sessions from **September** to **December** each year, and thereafter as required. It discusses specific issues through dedicated agenda items or sub-items, which lead to the **adoption of resolutions**. During the High-level week each September, the United Nations hosts **world leaders, policymakers, experts** and **advocates** for key Summits and high-level events, as mandated by UNGA resolutions, and the United Nations **Secretary-General**.

2.3. What are the key dates of the UNGA this year?

UNITE would like to bring to your attention these key dates:

- **September 10th**: Opening of the 79th Session of the UNGA
- **September 20th – 23rd**: Summit of the Future
 - o September 20th & 21st: Action Days
 - o September 22nd & 23rd: Summit
- **September 24th**: First day of the High-Level General Debate of the 79th UNGA
- **September 26th**, 10:00 – 18:00 ET: High-Level meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

3. The High-Level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

3.1. What is an HLM?

A United Nations (UN) High-Level Meeting (**HLM**) is convened by the UN General Assembly (**UNGA**), the primary decision-making body representing all **193 UN Member States**. In this forum, Member States collaborate on a broad range of **international issues** outlined in the **UN Charter**, including **development, peace** and **security**, and **international law**. The decision to convene a HLM on a specific topic is made under exceptional circumstances through a **UN resolution**, aiming to

facilitate agreement on **cooperation measures** and **solutions** to significant global challenges among **Heads of State** and **governments**.

Since the inaugural Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2001, the UN has convened various HLMs focused on health issues, including **HIV/AIDS** (2006, 2011, 2016, 2021), **Non-Communicable Diseases** (2011, 2014, 2018), **Antimicrobial Resistance** (2016), **Tuberculosis** (2018, 2023), **Universal Health Coverage** (2019, 2023), and **Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response** (2023).

3.2. Why an HLM in AMR?

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) poses significant challenges to the **sustainability** and **effectiveness** of public health responses to **communicable diseases** and **epidemics**. It threatens the progress made in health and development, hindering the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Given the **escalating rates of AMR**, there is an urgent need for action.

The 2024 High-Level Meeting (HLM) on AMR presents a historic opportunity to unite **Member States** and **relevant stakeholders** to address this critical issue. The **political declaration** to be adopted at this meeting will guide our **collective efforts** in tackling AMR moving forward.

The 2024 HLM on AMR was convened following the **adoption of Resolution 76/257** on **March 31st, 2022**, titled '*Global health and foreign policy: elevating pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response to the highest level of political leadership*'. This resolution underscores the importance of addressing AMR within the context of **global health** and **foreign policy**, highlighting the need for **coordinated** and **sustained political commitment**.

3.3. What are the current discussions on AMR?

The **2016 Political Declaration** of the High-Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), adopted on **September 22nd, 2016**, marked a significant milestone in addressing AMR. This declaration led to the adoption of several commitments at **national, regional, and global** levels, establishing a robust **framework** for combating AMR. Building on this foundation, the objective of the upcoming High-Level Meeting (HLM) on AMR in **2024** is to adopt a second Political Declaration, enabling countries and other relevant stakeholders to **accelerate progress** in addressing AMR. The meeting, themed '*Investing in the present and securing our future together: accelerating multi-sectoral global, regional, and national actions to address antimicrobial resistance*', will be convened by the **President of the General Assembly** at **UN Headquarters** in **New York** on **September 26th, 2024**.

In preparation for this critical event, a **one-day interactive Multi-Stakeholder Hearing** was organized by the President of the General Assembly with support from the **Quadripartite** (FAO, UNEP, WHO, and WOH) on **May 15th, 2024**. This hearing

aimed to gather diverse views and perspectives on key aspects of addressing AMR **to be included** in the **political declaration**.

UNITE was represented by **Hon. Sonia Sidhu**, Member of Parliament from Canada and UNITE's Chapter Chair for North America and Dr. **Mariam Jashi**, CEO of the Global Sepsis Alliance and UNITE Chapter Chair for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Hon. Jashi stressed the **role of Parliamentarians** in global health decision-making, particularly for AMR. She highlighted the critical importance of synergizing AMR policies with **Sepsis**, noting that the devastating 4.95 million AMR-related deaths are part of the 13.66 million Sepsis-related deaths annually. **Hon. Sidhu** emphasized that AMR threatens **health, safety, environmental, and food security**, and reiterated the impact of **climate change** on AMR. Both speakers underscored the importance of **parliamentary advocacy** in advancing the global health agenda and holding governments accountable for **international health commitments**.

4. The Summit of the Future

4.1. What is the Summit of the Future?

The proposal for a Summit of the Future to be held in September 2024 had its origin in the **'Our Common Agenda report'** of the **United Nations**. That report was a response by the **UN Secretary-General** to a call from **Member States** for ideas on how better to respond to current and **future challenges**.

Effective global cooperation is increasingly critical to our survival but difficult to achieve in an atmosphere of mistrust, using **outdated structures** that no longer reflect today's **political and economic realities**.

The *'Common Agenda'* report called for a renewal of **trust** and **solidarity** at all levels – between peoples, countries and generations. It made the case for a fundamental rethink of our **political, economic and social systems** so that they deliver more **fairly** and **effectively** for **everyone**.

The report was designed to **strengthen** and **accelerate multilateral agreements** – particularly the **2030 Agenda**, with the *'Summit of the Future'* as a defining moment to agree on the most critical improvements necessary. Member States also agreed that the Summit would have the **'Pact for the Future'** as an outcome.

4.2. What are the agenda and the key themes of the Summit of the Future?

On 22 and 23 September 2024, world leaders will convene at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the **'Pact for the Future'**, which will include a **'Global Digital Compact'** and a **'Declaration on Future Generations'** as annexes. Zero drafts of these documents were released and are available online, together with revision documents and related letters. More info on the Summit of the Future [here](#).

To generate additional opportunities for the **engagement of all actors**, and to elevate the **voice of youth** in the multilateral system, the **Secretary-General** of the United Nations is convening the Summit of the Future **‘Action Days’** on **September 20th** and **21st**, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Bringing together representatives from **Member States, civil society, private sector, academia, local and regional authorities, youth**, and many more, the *‘Action Days’* will provide an opportunity for broad engagement and inclusion. These stakeholders have all played a key role in shaping the *‘Pact for the Future’* and will be critical to its **implementation**. In parallel to the *‘Action Days’*, a limited number of **high-level side events**, organized by UN Member States, UN entities, relevant international organizations and stakeholder networks working in partnership and identified through an open call, will take place during the Summit of the Future *‘Action Days’* on September **20th** and **21st** only.

Key themes of the Action Days will be: *‘Digital Futures’* (**digital** and **technology**), *‘Peaceful Futures’* (**peace** and **security**), and *‘Sustainable Futures for All’* (**sustainable development and financing**). There will also be a dedicated focus throughout the day on **future generations**. More info on the Summit of the Future *‘Action Days’* is available [here](#).

4.3. Outcome documents and letters from the Co-facilitators

‘Pact for the Future’ (Co-facilitators: Germany and Namibia):
<https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future/pact-for-the-future-revisions>

‘Declaration on Future Generations’ (Co-facilitators: Netherlands and Jamaica):
<https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future/declaration-on-future-generations>

‘Global Digital Compact’ (Co-facilitators: Sweden and Zambia):
<https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future/global-digital-compact>

5. Why is Parliamentarians’ action needed?

At the halfway point of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030, **global progress is falling short of expectations** with the UN **Secretary-General António Guterres** assessing **“we are far off track”**.

As highlighted in the **‘Our Common Agenda report’**, there are various actions diverse stakeholders, particularly **parliamentarians, legislators** and **policymakers** should prioritize, designed to **accelerate the implementation** of existing global agreements, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

According to the Secretary-General:

*“Now is the time to re-embrace **global solidarity** and find new ways to **work together** for the common good.*

Now is the time to **renew the social contract** between **Governments** and their people and within **societies**, so as to **rebuild trust** and embrace a comprehensive vision of **human rights**.

Now is the time to **end the “infodemic”** plaguing our world by defending a common, **empirically** backed consensus around **facts, science** and **knowledge**.

Now is the time to correct a glaring **blind spot** in how we **measure economic prosperity** and **progress**. When profits come at the **expense of people** and our **planet**, we are left with an incomplete picture of the **true cost of economic growth**.

Now is the time to think for the long term, to deliver more for **young people** and **succeeding generations** and to be better prepared for the challenges ahead.

Now is the time for a **stronger, more networked** and **inclusive multilateral system**, anchored within the United Nations.

Effective multilateralism depends on an effective United Nations, one able to adapt to **global challenges** while living up to the **purposes** and **principles** of its **Charter**.”

5. How can you engage with your government?

- Advocate for **your inclusion in the delegation to the 79th UNGA** with this downloadable letter template ([Click here](#))
- Advocate for your country to highlight key global health issues during the 79th UNGA and high-level meetings, with our advocacy guide (**available soon**)

These resources will also be available at UNITE’s linktree account, that you can access [clicking here](#).