THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

29 March 2021

Excellency,

Further to my letter dated 15 March 2021 regarding the High-level Interactive Dialogue on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), to be held on Thursday, 29 April 2021 in the General Assembly Hall, I have the honour to circulate a concept note and a preliminary programme.

The high-level meeting will consist of an opening segment, followed by four interactive panels and a closing segment. The four interactive panels will: (i) review the AMR issue in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, (ii) take stock of global progress on AMR, (iii) assess national level progress on AMR, and (iv) discuss sufficient and sustainable AMR financing.

Due to the interactive nature of the discussions, there will be no pre-established list of speakers for the high-level meeting. Delegations will be invited to request the floor to pose a question to the panelists by pressing the microphone button at their desks in the General Assembly Hall. To ensure the widest possible participation in the interactive dialogue, interventions should be brief and concise, and no more than two minutes.

For further information on the meeting, you may contact my Senior Advisers, Mr. Shaoxuan Liu (shaoxuan.liu@un.org) and Ms. Toni-Shae Freckleton (toni-shae.freckleton@un.org).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Volkan BOZKIR

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations

HIGH-LEVEL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)

BACKGROUND

crisis; and by 2030, AMR could force up to 24 million people into extreme poverty². As a present and growing pandemic, AMR may be considered a central part of future pandemic preparedness.

Rising levels of AMR are making infections in humans, animal and plants harder to treat and threatening recent gains in key areas of global health, food security, economic growth, and development. COVID-19 has exacerbated inequalities and AMR will also drive inequalities between countries and communities. No health system will be sustainable without access to affordable and effective antibiotics.

Although antibiotics are not recommended for majority of the COVID-19 patients, many patients are nevertheless receiving antibiotics. Such increased use of antibiotics, coupled with disruption of health care services such as TB, HIV and malaria treatment and vaccination, may increase the risk for antimicrobial resistance.

Much of what needs to be done to tackle AMR is part of overall good public, animal, and ecosystem health

with a sustainable and inclusive recovery. Strengthening WASH provisions, biosecurity measures in animal rearing and along the food chain, as well as the supply of first line medicines, all have huge co-benefits beyond tackling AMR. There are, however, some AMR specific actions where focused action on AMR is required, including data collection, multisectoral coordination and regulations to enforce and manage the supply and use of quality antibiotics for human, animal and plant health, along with environmental controls to prevent pollution from antibiotic residues and limit the transmission of resistant organisms.

In recent years, there has been good progress on tackling AMR but there is an urgent need to scale up action in all relevant sectors as we build back from COVID-19 and build a sustainable future for people, animals and the planet.

In May 2015, the World Health Assembly adopted a Global Action Plan on AMR, also adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). In September 2016, the first ever UN high-level meeting on AMR saw member states adopt an ambitious political declaration.

In May 2019, the UN Secretary-

General Session adopted resolutions which called for stronger actions at all levels to tackle AMR and the establishment of the Tripartite Joint Secretariat.

In November 2020, the One Health Global Leaders Group, co-chaired by the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and Barbados and including representatives from all sectors government, civil society, foundations and the private sector, was launched to scale up attention and advance political action on the urgent challenge posed by antimicrobial resistance.

Welcomed by the General Assembly in the Global Health and Foreign Policy Resolution of 2020, the Global Leaders Group aims to develop and work towards a shared global vision and goals on AMR, including by strengthening global cooperation and engagement, advocating for sustainable investment for research, development and access to antimicrobials, and prioritising the implementation of National Action Plans in the countries that need them most.

The General Assembly High-Level Interactive Dialogue on Tackling AMR is an important opportunity to strengthen political commitment, take stock of progress, recommit to actions, and build back better from COVID-19 by agreeing further practical steps that can effectively address challenges to tackling AMR as part of future pandemic preparedness through a One Health approach while supporting the delivery of the SDGs.

AMR has the potential to be the next global health crisis and has already affected our response to COVID-19. As the world grapples with the devastating impacts of the pandemic and looks towards the future, this is a critical opportunity to include AMR in our build back better and achieve the SDGs, including SDGs 1, 3, 5, 8, 10 and 12, and especially for people living in LMICs, and in vulnerable situations.
Overview of the current global progress including work of the Tripartite WHO, FAO and OIE on AMR, recommendations by the Inter Agency Coordination Group (IAOG) on AMR, mapping of global commitments to date, and presentation of the One Health Global Leaders Group vision

Case studies of AMR national action plan (NAP) design and implementation; linking AMR to development work e.g. data/surveillance, SDG indicator on AMR, and UN development cooperation frameworks.