

Welcome Messages

High Patrons of the World Health Summit 2024



Trust is of inestimable value. It is established when we listen to each other, and it grows with every frank and honest discussion. Your motto this year – “Building Trust for a Healthier World” – expresses that very clearly. Because there is one absolute prerequisite for all the highly stimulating specialist discussions, all the high-level scientific presentations and panels at the World Health Summit: trust! Trust in research and science, but also trust in cooperation across borders, disciplines and research institutions.

Not even such broad cooperation can always prevent the outbreak of infectious diseases – but it can slow or even stop their spread. The most topical litmus test is our handling of mpox. The World Health Organization announced the highest level of alert very soon after the outbreak of the disease, thus clearing the way for better communication and for the exchange of data on mpox.

The rapid supply of vaccines, via national or EU channels, depending on availability, and via the First Response Fund of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, was and still is important. Germany immediately contributed to strengthening laboratory capacities at the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

We will remain committed to longer-term measures, too. These include the development of vaccine production in Africa, in order to be able to meet demand quickly and in a targeted manner locally. This will protect human lives. And it will increase trust in the fact that in future we will better prevent pandemics.

Technical advances give us grounds for confidence. AI and data-driven research open up new possibilities for the better understanding and prevention of diseases. New technologies also allow diagnostic and treatment methods to be further developed. Even now, the research sector is succeeding in making faster and faster breakthroughs. We saw that with the rapid development of the COVID-19 vaccines, and are seeing it again with the vaccines against Ebola, malaria, bird flu and mpox.

AI can become a game changer in pharmaceutical research and in the fight against antibiotic resistance. Zoonotic diseases can be stemmed if we analyze

and closely monitor the interconnections between the environment, animals and humans and their influence on human health – entirely in keeping with the One Health approach.

Such breakthroughs in research and technology must not benefit only a few. That is why strong multilateral institutions are so important, especially in the health sector. Germany takes seriously its responsibility to support institutions such as Gavi, UNAIDS, the Global Fund, the Wellcome Trust, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, the global Pandemic Fund and, of course, the WHO. That is one reason why I am so glad to be co-hosting this year’s first WHO Investment Round. The more donors – both traditional and new – take part, the more we can achieve for global health, for the health of each and every one of us.

Forums like the World Health Summit provide the foundations. They strengthen trust in global cooperation and our research.

Thank you very much for your important contributions to this. Welcome to Berlin! I wish you good and successful talks in a spirit of trust at the World Health Summit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Olaf Scholz', written in a cursive style.

Olaf Scholz
Chancellor of the
Federal Republic of Germany