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Madrid, Spain, 21/10/2024

Dear Co-chairs, Vice-chairs and Head of the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Body (INB)

Dear Director General of the World Health Organization,

Despite the clear and ongoing threat posed by diseases and disparities in access to medical countermeasures, political will to deliver a robust Pandemic Agreement remains insufficient, leaving humankind exposed to the risk of another pandemic. Club de Madrid, as an organization of more than 115 democratic former Presidents and Prime Ministers, strongly expects that the ongoing negotiations on the matter will pave the way for meaningful progress and tangible outcomes. We remain committed to supporting the process and urge all parties involved to engage constructively, leading to effective and decisive steps forward.

While it may not be possible to achieve all desired outcomes immediately, the progress made so far should propel us toward a comprehensive Pandemic Agreement that can be expanded as circumstances evolve. Compromise and collaboration must be prioritized. We urge a clear timeline to be established and implemented, including the setup of necessary compliance means for assessing developments in preparedness, response, and other critical commitments, especially those related to equity.

The financing of global health issues remains uncoordinated. Financing and the capacity to respond effectively to emergencies, both globally and in affected countries, must be incorporated into the discussions as an essential factor. Furthermore, during a pandemic, low- and middle-income countries need substantial and coordinated multilateral financial support. The establishment of a financing scheme within the framework of a Pandemic Agreement is, finally, crucial to achieving equity.

Unfortunately, the 2023 UN High-Level Meeting on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response was unable to galvanize high-level commitment and momentum for the global governance of health emergencies involving a compulsory mandate for Member States. Without a universal approach, the demands of the Global South for equitable access to medicines and vaccines will never be duly recognized. Firm commitments are needed to ensure that all countries have access to countermeasures in the event of another pandemic. This is not only a matter of fairness but of global health security.

We urge Member States to reach an agreement to be completed at the latest by November if there is to be a World Health Assembly Special session this year. The decision-making must not be postponed beyond that point.

Club de Madrid, as the world's largest forum of democratic former Presidents and Prime Ministers, is convinced that with compromise from all sides, a strong and effective Agreement can be achieved.

The time to act is now.

Sincerely,

Danilo Türk

President of Club de Madrid
President of Slovenia (2007-2012)

**In partnership with the Panel for a Global Public Health Convention*