

Top news:

- Negotiators agreed on a final text for the COVID-19 resolution, co-sponsored by the EU and various other countries. Final text was in silence procedure until 12pm noon today.
- More than 140 world leaders issued an open letter calling on governments to ensure a patent-free, equally accessible, fairly distributed and priced vaccine against COVID-19.
- Sanofi announced it is working with EU regulators to speed up access to a potential vaccine in Europe after yesterday's announcement of the US most likely being the first one to receive the vaccine.
- Roche in dialogue with the UK about a 'phased rollout' of its antibody test.
- World economy in 2020 to shrink by 3.2 per cent, racking up some \$8.5 trillion in overall losses, according to new estimates by the UN.
- UN warns of global mental health crisis due to COVID-19 pandemic in new policy brief, with healthcare workers, but also children, adolescents and women, particularly at risk.
- UN General Assembly most likely not be held in its usual format in NYC in September, UN to explore other options.

WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

- **STAT News:** [World Health Assembly draft resolution boosts access to Covid-19 medicines](#) (also [KEI](#), [HPW](#)). Ahead of the WHA next week, negotiators have agreed on a [draft text](#) that offers flexibility on how IP rights apply to future coronavirus drugs. The text was in silence procedure until 12pm noon today. The resolution includes language around voluntary pooling and licensing of patents to facilitate timely, equitable and affordable access to COVID-19 treatments. Ellen 't Hoen, Director of Medicines Law & Policy, noted that, although the draft does not mention "compulsory licensing", the language around not creating new rights for countries is in support of enhancing access. The US has opposed many principals of the resolution, observers say, even including calls for "universal, timely and equitable access and fair distribution" of COVID-19 remedies, and are also not listed as a co-sponsor.

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- **The Brussels Times:** [‘Unlikely’ that world leaders will gather for UN General Assembly](#). UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said it is 'unlikely' that world leaders will gather for the UN General Assembly in NYC in September, and the UN is currently looking at alternatives.

PRICING & ACCESS

- **UNAIDS:** [World leaders unite in call for a people's vaccine against COVID-19](#). More than 140 world leaders, and experts issued an [open letter](#) calling on governments to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics, tests and treatments will be provided free of charge to everyone, everywhere.
- **Oxfam:** [Vaccinating poorest half of humanity against coronavirus could cost less than four month's big pharma profits](#). Oxfam warned that there could be a delay of vaccine reaching vulnerable people, especially those living in developing countries. José María Vera, Oxfam International Interim Executive Director said: "Providing a vaccine to 3.7 billion people could

cost less than what the ten biggest pharmaceutical companies make in four months”. Oxfam started the social media campaign for #PeoplesVaccines. ATM Index also [joined](#) the call.

- **Reuters:** [Sanofi to accelerate European COVID-19 vaccine access after CEO prioritizes U.S. preorders](#). In a statement, Sanofi said it is encouraged to see the mobilization of the EU Commission over the past weeks, exploring similar measures [like in the US under a partnership with BARDA] that could expedite both vaccines development and access to the European population.
- **Bloomberg:** [Sanofi CEO's Remarks on Vaccine Plans Stir Outrage in France](#). A vaccine against Covid-19 must be a “common good” that stands “outside of market rules,” an official at the Elysee palace said Thursday. Furthermore, junior French Economy Minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher raises strong concerns over privileged access for particular countries.
- **Financial Times:** [Any Covid-19 vaccine must be treated as a global public good](#). The ugly battle between nations over limited supplies of tests and personal protective equipment will be a sideshow compared to the scramble over a vaccine. Yet if a vaccine is to be anything like the silver bullet that some imagine, it will have to be available to the world's poor as well as to its rich, argues David Piling, FT Africa editor.

R&D COOPERATION

- **Financial Times:** [Why vaccine 'nationalism' could slow coronavirus fight](#). European countries and the WHO are trying to keep the multilateral option alive with a series of fundraising summits. But the US and China have been reluctant to commit, instead drafting in their pharmaceutical and biotech groups for what some see as a tussle for national bragging rights.
- **Project Syndicate:** [Everyone Wins from Vaccine Cooperation](#). *Op-ed co-penned by Michael Kremer, 2019 Nobel laureate in economics, Gates Professor of Developing Societies at Harvard University.* The authors estimate that an investment of about \$145 billion (.17% of world GDP) for COVID-19 vaccine candidates would be ideal, but that a program just half that size would yield substantial benefits. They outline four benefits of collaboration for COVID-19 medical tools.

GLOBAL RESPONSE

- **AP:** [UN council tries again to agree on COVID-19 resolution](#). The U.N. Security Council is trying again to reach agreement on its first resolution since the coronavirus pandemic started but a dispute between the U.S. and China over mentioning the WHO remains unresolved.
- **WGoQatar:** [Qatar launches 'Group of Friends of Solidarity for Global Health Security' to combat coronavirus pandemic](#). Qatar, South Korea, Canada, Denmark and Sierra Leone launched the Group of Friends of Solidarity for Global Health Security to combat the coronavirus pandemic.
- **EU Commission:** [EU provides support in Horn of Africa region](#). The EU is providing an additional €105.5 million to countries in the Horn of Africa as the coronavirus pandemic risks worsening the humanitarian situation across the region where many continue to suffer from armed conflict, displacement, and recurrent droughts and floods.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

- **UN:** [World economy to shrink by 3.2 per cent, new UN report projects](#). The world economy in 2020 is projected to shrink by 3.2 per cent, racking up some \$8.5 trillion in overall losses – wiping out nearly four years of output gains, according to a mid-year economic analysis by the UN.

- **Bloomberg:** [World's Insurers Face \\$203 Billion in losses](#). Lloyd's of London, the world's largest insurance exchange, estimates the industry will suffer around \$203 billion in losses from the coronavirus pandemic this year.
- **Financial Times:** [The coronavirus downturn makes the worst-off suffer most](#). The pandemic and the economic lockdown exacerbate existing tensions in the economy — the inequalities, polarisation and erosion of a sense of belonging that have fuelled political turmoil for years.
- **The Africa Report:** [Lockdowns across Africa creating major economic loss](#). It is too soon to assess the full economic impacts that COVID-19 lockdowns will have on developing countries. But early research indicates that many African economies are significantly impacted and that poorer households are struggling.

SUPPLY

- **DW:** [As coronavirus disrupts supply chains, could Africa profit?](#) Amid the coronavirus outbreak, many multinational corporations are reviewing their strong dependence on production in Asia, notably China. African countries stand to win much as companies aim to diversify supply chains.

TREATMENT & VACCINE DEVELOPMENT

IFPMA members

- **New York Times:** [Health Groups Ask India to Rescind Gilead's Patents for COVID-19 Drug Remdesivir](#), so it can be distributed more fairly to coronavirus patients around the world, particularly in poorer nations. Gilead's three patents in India for remdesivir stem from 2009 when the drug was in development to treat Ebola.
- **Jakarta Post:** [Takeda says coronavirus treatment trial using recovered patients' blood could start in July](#). Takeda Pharmaceutical Co Ltd could start a clinical trial as early as July for a potential treatment of COVID-19 that is based on antibodies from recovered patients' blood, company executives said.

Others

- **Reuters:** [Coronavirus vaccine possible in about a year, says EU agency](#). EMA, in communication with 33 developers, was doing all it could to speed up the approval process, the EMA's head of vaccines, Marco Cavaleri, said, but he was sceptical of claims any could be ready by September.
- **The Telegraph:** [Oxford vaccine trial moves into hospitals amid fears coronavirus not prevalent enough in wider society](#). As researchers wait for an "efficacy signal" that will establish whether those who have been given the vaccine can ward off the virus, Prof Bell admitted there was a risk that there may not be enough "active disease" to infect people, prompting the team to employ different tactics.

DIAGNOSTICS

- **AA:** [Swiss firm Roche in talks with UK over antibody tests](#). Roche says is in dialogue with UK's National Health Service about a 'phased rollout' of antibody test in COVID-19 fight.
- **New York Times:** [Coronavirus Testing Used by the White House Could Miss Infections](#). A rapid coronavirus test used by the White House to screen its staff could miss infections up to 48 percent of the time, according to a [study](#) by researchers at N.Y.U. Langone Health.
- **Fierce Biotech:** [Thermo Fisher, WuXi and Mayo Clinic to develop open-platform COVID-19 antibody test](#). Thermo Fisher Scientific is developing its own COVID-19 antibody test

through an ongoing, three-way collaboration with WuXi Diagnostics and the Mayo Clinic, and plans to seek international authorizations for the test over the next few weeks.

CLINICAL TRIALS

- **STAT:** [Where's the data? In a pandemic, now is no time to sit on COVID-19 trial results.](#) Ed Silverman, editor of the Pharmalot column at STAT News, says that rather than release information in dribs and drabs, study sponsors — whether a government, company, or university — should release all the results lickety-split, especially when it comes to medicines for fighting a pandemic. Data should not be held back.

GLOBAL HEALTH IMPACT

- **Nature:** [Anti-vaccine movement could undermine efforts to end coronavirus pandemic, researchers warn.](#) As scientists work to create a vaccine against COVID-19, a small but fervent anti-vaccination movement is marshalling against it and are seeding outlandish narratives.
- **WEF:** [Our recovery from the coronavirus crisis must have gender empowerment at its heart.](#) Women and girls stand to lose the most during the coronavirus pandemic, but steps can be taken to ensure that women's role in industry can be made stronger during the recovery phase.

OTHER

- **Financial Times:** [WTO chief Roberto Azevêdo to step down early.](#) The head of the World Trade Organization is stepping down early from his post, opening a vacancy at an institution that has been attacked by the Trump administration for “allowing” China to practise unfair trade.

WHO - COVID-19 UPDATE, 14 May

No media briefing by Dr Tedros today.

WHO: [Substantial investment needed to avert mental health crisis.](#) The COVID-19 pandemic is highlighting the need to urgently increase investment in services for mental health or risk a massive increase in mental health conditions in the coming months, according to a [policy brief on COVID-19 and mental health](#) issued by the United Nations today. Reports already indicate an increase in symptoms of depression and anxiety in a number of countries. Specific population groups are at particular risk of COVID-related psychological distress. Frontline health-care workers, faced with heavy workloads, life-or-death decisions, and risk of infection, are particularly affected.

WHO AFRO [press conference](#)

- Dr Moeti, Regional director has said food security in Africa is an urgent issue as more than 200 million people on the continent are malnourished and the pandemic has made this worse and the malnourishment makes them have weaker immune systems and thus makes them more susceptible to the virus highlighting a vicious cycle.

WHO EURO [press conference](#)

- Dr Hans Kluge, Regional director has said there is an overall slowing of the pandemic in Europe but stressed that now the people become the main actors and there are three key messages he outlined:
 - There is no room for complacency – remain vigilant.

- Authorities need to listen to their publics and adapt accordingly, in real-time.
- Behave responsibly, we each shape the story of this pandemic.