



Ministerial meeting of the Alliance for Multilateralism (24 Feb) - press release

The Alliance again met at ministerial level in the margins of the High Level Segment of the Human Rights Council, this year on 24 February 2021, to show its commitment to protecting, preserving and advancing Human Rights law and institutions as the COVID-19 pandemic hits the entire world.

The Alliance took a closer look at how to preserve Human Rights in the light of **new challenges, both online and resulting from climate change**, while also taking into account the **gender dimension**. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be the most pressing issue for multilateral cooperation in 2021, the Alliance also examined ways of reinforcing the international community's preparedness and response to future health crisis.

Human Rights Online: Participants stressed the applicability of international Human Rights law in cyberspace. Human rights apply online just as offline and irrespective of the technology used. They called for the support of relevant initiatives such as the Freedom Online Coalition, the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence and the Partnership on Information and Democracy, and welcomed the proposals of the Information and Democracy Forum to ensure the sustainability of journalism.

Climate Change and Human Rights: Climate change has negative implications for a whole range of Human Rights. Women's rights are often particularly affected. Participants called for the integration, on a systemic basis, of the protection of human rights and for a gender-sensitive approach in climate change policies. They expressed support for the Action coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice, in the framework of the Generation Equality Forum. They also stressed their strong expectations that these principles will contribute to the multilateral environmental agenda, including the three conferences of parties to take place in 2021 on climate, biodiversity and desertification.

Learning from the Pandemic - Preparedness and Response: The members of the Alliance for multilateralism will continue to put forward proposals for the reform of the multilateral health architecture and for the strengthening of WHO's central role. Participants also stressed the need for equitable global access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics and called for support to the ACT-A initiative and for joining the Charter for Equitable Access to Covid-19 Tools.

Looking back at Alliance meetings in 2020:

The Alliance for Multilateralism was launched during the high level segment of the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly, on 26 September 2019. The Alliance **met five times in 2020** with the aim to:

- promote the implementation of international humanitarian law, protect the work of humanitarian workers and space for humanitarian action and support the fight against impunity and for accountability, at the opening of the session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva on **24 February 2020**;
- support the central role of the World Health Organization in the management of COVID-19 and put forward proposals for the reform of the multilateral health architecture at two meetings on **16 April 2020** and **26 June 2020**.
- contribute to "building back better" following the COVID-19 crisis, focused on climate, health, digital technologies and gender equality on **25 September 2020** in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly.
- strengthen the multilateral health architecture (launch of One Health High-Level Expert Council) and on fighting infodemics on **12 November 2020** during the Paris Peace Forum. /.