

Understanding the Pandemic Treaty

(WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness)



In December 2021 the **World Health Assembly** (WHA) held a Special Session, (the second-ever since WHO's founding in 1948) and [agreed](#) to develop a 'WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness' – the so-called '**Pandemic Treaty**'.

The decision establishes an intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) to draft and negotiate the instrument. The INB held its first sessions in February and March 2022 to elect bureau officers and agree on working methods and timelines.

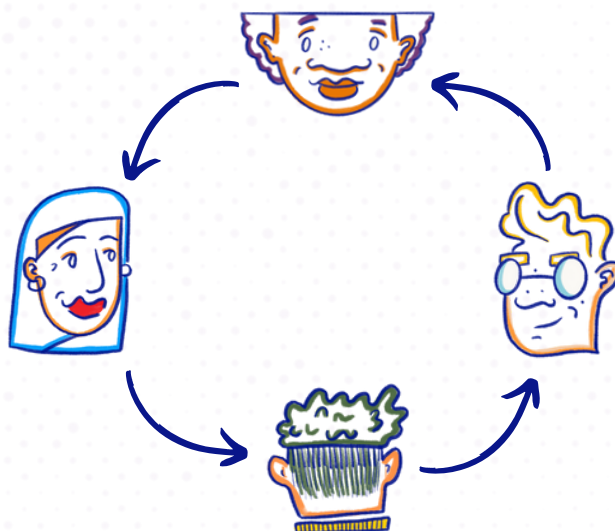
All WHA Member States are members of the INB.

The INB bureau – whose role is to guide the negotiations – is composed of the Netherlands and South Africa (co-chairs), Brazil, Egypt, Japan, and Thailand (vice-chairs).



During its first two meetings, the INB agreed on a tentative timeline, methods of work, and modalities of stakeholders' engagement ([all available here](#)).

How will the Pandemic Treaty be developed?



The current plan is to finalise the 'instrument' by **May 2024**.

The INB will work through:

Plenary INB sessions

open to all Member States, [plus](#) the UN, Observers, Non-State Actors in official relations with WHO, and other stakeholders identified by the INB itself; **which could include civil society, community representatives, and individual experts**. These will be key meetings where the INB will discuss and agree upon the substantive elements of the treaty, the modalities of participation of other stakeholders, and the kind of instrument that will be negotiated. Later INB sessions will be dedicated to negotiating the text of the instrument. Decisions will be taken by consensus.

INB subgroups

made up of Member States, responsible for discussing specific topics/elements of the instruments. These have not been set up yet;

Regional committees

made up of Member States;

Public hearings

open to all actors - including civil society not in official relations with WHO - dedicated to collecting input from a broad range of stakeholders.