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Infectious Diseases Leaders Respond to President Trump's Defunding of the World Health Organization

The unprecedented public health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic demands a comprehensive international response. President Trump's announcement Tuesday that he will suspend funding to the World Health Organization is against all of our best interests. The members of the Infectious Diseases Society of America, its HIV Medicine Association, the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America, the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society, and the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists call upon Congress to use all means at its disposal to counter this move.

We must all be allies against this threat; this is not the time to stand alone.

Global coordination and cooperation will be critical to ensure the necessary surveillance, monitoring, detection, prevention, research and responses to fight this new infectious disease threat to which no nation alone has the means to defend itself.

The WHO provides technical and scientific expertise in countries with limited resources with services that are essential to containing the impacts of infectious disease threats and being better prepared for the inevitable outbreaks to come. The ability of the United States to protect its people depends on those efforts. In addition, with its capacity to mobilize global research and effective sharing of data, the WHO plays a pivotal role in enabling united efforts against this and future pandemics.

As leaders of organizations representing infectious diseases, healthcare epidemiology and infection prevention and pharmacological specialists and health providers, we are on the frontlines of both research and health facilities around the globe confronting the human, societal and economic toll of this public health disaster. We ask President Trump to address this crisis in the only way it can be effectively contained, in concert with all affected people and nations, and as part of the international community.

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