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Ladies and gentlemen, let us start right away. The title of this second session on health is “Global Governance and Public Health”. Let me just say as an introduction, that issues of governance of health and governance for health have become particularly prominent on the international agenda with the Covid pandemic, and not least because of the increasing geopolitical dimension of global health. New challenges have emerged around vaccine nationalism, vaccine and mask diplomacy, access to supply chains and intellectual property waivers. As the pandemic progressed, health moved from being a sort of soft power agenda to becoming a critical economic and security issue, that took up last parts of the deliberations of regional summits, like the European Council, the G20, the G7, the World Trade Organization. No meeting of the G7, G20 or the European Council in the last two years did not include or had the issue of health as a dominant component.

In the May 2021 report of the Independent Panel on Pandemic Preparedness and Response, of which both Anders Nordström and myself were part, came up with a number of recommendations. Within those recommendations there was one about governance that suggested that in order for the world to be better prepared for the future, we need to elevate the level of leadership to prepare a response to global health threats. One of the suggestions the panel put forward was establishing what we called a Global Health Threats Council, some sort of Security Council for health threats, similar to what was negotiated in the nuclear field after the Chernobyl catastrophe, to ensure accountable and multisectoral action in the future. We also discussed strengthening the independence of the WHO and its capacity to react to an emergency. Several of the recommendations of the panel overlapped with recommendations from other groups, such as the G20 high-level group on pandemic finance and the Monti Commission in Europe.

Where are we today with these discussions and negotiations? First, negotiations have now started in Geneva at multi-lateral level on revising the international health regulations and on a new binding pandemic treaty, following a resolution of the World Health Assembly in November last year. Second, the US together with a number of other countries and the World Bank, has called on the establishment and actually launched a new pandemic financing facility. There are pros and cons on this and maybe we will discuss that later. Third, the General Assembly of the UN has called on a special session of the UN General Assembly on Pandemic Preparedness and Response, which will be held in 2023. If you remember, it was the first special high-level session of the UN General Assembly in 2001 on HIV/AIDS that was really the turning point in mobilizing the world against the AIDS pandemic. Also, the special session of the UN General Assembly on Ebola in 2014, brought the issue to the highest level



of public and political awareness. We are now looking forward to the ongoing negotiations of a political resolution at that special session of the UN. As we now work at global level and most importantly I believe, structural institutional and political changes are also occurring at regional level. As we heard from Juliette, during the pandemic, the African Union united somehow behind President Ramaphosa and a continental plan to procure vaccines and pandemic goods. We saw the emergence of a remarkable African CDC that took leadership at both continental and global levels, and the Union created an African regulatory agency for medicines on the model of the FDA or the EMA.

Let us now discuss these issues at global and regional level. We have a great panel today. Anders Nordström is Ambassador for Global Health from Sweden, who may also say a word about the forthcoming Swedish Presidency of the Union. Dr Haruka Sakamoto is Senior Fellow at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo, who is online. Good morning, Haruka and thank you for being with us again. Dr Farida Al Hosani is the spokesperson on health from UAE. Lionel Zinsou is Co-Chair of SouthBridge and Chair of Terra Nova and former Prime Minister of Benin. Finally, Jacques Biot, is former President of the École Polytechnique in France, whom I have asked to provide a perspective from an informed outsider.