

# The silent pandemic of antimicrobial resistance

Your excellencies, esteemed colleagues.

It's an honour to join this important conversation today.

For me, some of the scariest moments of this pandemic were right at the start, when we were dealing with so many unknowns.

Before it was even called COVID-19, what we saw was a novel threat to the world's health.

We didn't yet know how to treat it and it was far from certain that we would ever have a successful vaccine.

We owe so much of our progress against this deadly disease to the power and ingenuity of science and modern medicine.

But if we fail to act on antimicrobial resistance, modern medicine as we know it can cease to exist.

And the silent pandemic of AMR could have consequences far more deadly than COVID.

In my view, it's an existential threat as great as climate change.

We must remind ourselves of what it's like to be faced with an untreatable disease and never forget that feeling, so we don't ever have to face it again.

We need governments to recognise this and act now. And I pledge to do that.

We need to get better at how we use existing antibiotics, whether for humans or for animals.

We need to develop new antibiotics.

We need to make sure the supply chain is safe and shared, with shared global standards.

And crucially, we need to think always about the One Health interactions between humans, animals and the environment we all share.

Because this pandemic has reminded us that when we don't get this right, we are all vulnerable.

So we must act together.

The UK is determined to use our presidency of the G7 this year to bring partners together and take bold new steps on AMR.

We're determined to play our part, including through our international funding. [The Fleming Fund](#) is helping 24 countries develop their surveillance and systems for infection and AMR.

And we very recently granted an additional £1.3 million of UK investment to the tripartite multi-partner trust fund on AMR, on top of our existing investments.

We're looking forward to working with any partner who shares our desire for ever more creative ways of addressing the threat of AMR.

And it's especially important AMR is at the heart of the conversations at the upcoming COP26 and UN Food Systems summits.

So on behalf of the government of the United Kingdom, I welcome and fully endorse today's call to action on AMR, because we have so much still to do together – learning from the lessons of this pandemic and learning those lessons quickly.

Working across human, animal and environmental health to make sure that we tackle the next pandemic, so generations ahead of us will have the modern medicine that we are able to benefit from today.