

# UN announces interagency group to coordinate global fight against antimicrobial resistance

16 March 2017 – The United Nations today announced the establishment of an Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, which will be co-chaired by Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan.

“As we enter the era of sustainable development, I would like to emphasize that antimicrobial resistance really does pose a formidable threat to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in our developing countries,” Ms. Mohammed told reporters at UN Headquarters in New York.

Antimicrobial resistance happens when microorganisms (such as bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites) change when they are exposed to antimicrobial drugs – antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals, antimalarials, and anthelmintics. Microorganisms that develop antimicrobial resistance are sometimes referred to as “superbugs.”

As a result, says WHO, the medicines become ineffective and infections persist in the body, increasing the risk of spread to others.

Ms. Mohammed said the creation of the UN joint agency group to combat AMR and advise on the global effort, is a sign of how seriously UN Member States were taking the threat.

Last September, Member States adopted the Political Declaration of the High-Level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance that contained a request for the UN Secretary-General to establish such a body.

She said AMR is a “multi-sectoral problem” affecting human and animal health, agriculture, as well as the global environment and trade. Clean water, sustainable food production and poverty alleviation are but a few of the challenges it poses.

“Many UN agencies will need to engage in this fight, as will other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and critically, the general public,” she explained, welcoming the Secretary-General’s establishment of the group, which would seek to provide practical guidance on the ways to combat AMR and to recommend how global efforts could and should be better coordinated.

**AUDIO:** Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed speaks about drug-resistant microbes ‘formidable threat’ to SDGs *Credit: UN News*

WHO chief Chan said antibiotic resistance is already prolonging illness worldwide, and the political declaration was a vital commitment to help tackle the scourge globally.

She said the inter-agency group would support governments across the world, as well as advising on the “use and abuse” of antibiotics for people, and livestock.

Ms. Chan promised that the group, appointed by the Secretary-General, would “get to work right away.”

RELATED: UN health agency lists antibiotic-resistant bacteria which pose human threat

The group will be comprised of high-level representatives from relevant UN agencies, other international organizations, and individual experts across different sectors, including animal health, agriculture, and environment.

It will produce a report to the Secretary-General for the UN General Assembly session starting in September 2018.

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## [Guterres grateful for US support as largest UN contributor; will work with Member States on reform](#)

16 March 2017 – Secretary-General António Guterres is committed to reforming the United Nations and stands ready to discuss with the United States and any other Member State how best to create a more cost-effective Organization that can tackle the enormous challenges facing the international community, his spokesman said today.

A statement from Spokesman Stéphane Dujarric said the UN has seen the blueprint of the 2018 budget released by the White House and notes that the budgetary process in the US is complex and lengthy and it needs to be completed.

Media reports suggest that the proposed budget would seek major cuts in US diplomacy and foreign aid, among other areas.

“The Secretary-General is grateful for the support the United States has given to the United Nations over the years as the Organization’s largest financial contributor,” said that statement.

The statement goes on to say that the Mr. Guterres is totally committed to reforming the United Nations and ensuring that it is fit for purpose and

delivers results in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

However, abrupt funding cuts can force the adoption of ad hoc measures that will undermine the impact of longer-term reform efforts, it adds.

“The Secretary-General stands ready to discuss with the United States and any other Member State how best we can create a more cost-effective Organization to pursue our shared goals and values,” underscored the statement.

It goes on to note that the UN chief fully subscribes to the necessity to effectively combat terrorism, but believes that it requires more than military spending.

“There is also a need to address the underlying drivers of terrorism through continuing investments in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, countering violent extremism, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, sustainable and inclusive development, the enhancement and respect of human rights, and timely responses to humanitarian crises,” it states.

“The international community is facing enormous global challenges that can only be addressed by a strong and effective multilateral system, of which the United Nations remains the fundamental pillar,” the statement concludes.

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## [The Tories would rather let giant corporations continue to rip off customers than to take action – Whitehead](#)

**Alan**

**Whitehead, Shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change**, following the debate on energy prices earlier today, said:

“Today’s

Parliamentary debate shows yet again that this Tory Government will not stand up for hard-pressed families being squeezed by Big Six energy company prices and rip-off tariffs rises. The Government’s own investigation found that customers lost almost £2bn a year due to excessive pricing by energy companies, but the Tories would rather let giant corporations continue to rip off customers than to take action.

“Labour

will introduce a firm price cap on energy price rises and rip-off tariffs,

blocking companies from making extortionate price increases. After seven years of Tory failure, working people need a government that will fight their corner.”

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## **Official Statistics: Weekly rainfall and river flow summary: 8 to 14 March 2017**

A dry week across most of England. River flows are normal for the time of year at the majority of indicator sites.

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## **Current Northeast budget around Rs 50,000 cr: Dr Jitendra Singh**

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said here today that the current budget for Northeast for 2017-18 is around Rs. 50,000 crore which is significantly higher than that in earlier years and is also an indication of high priority that the Modi Government accords to the development of that region.