

Leaders Speak With One Voice on Global Health Architecture Reforms at Africa CDC's African High-Level Ministerial Committee Launch

At a pivotal moment for global health reform, African ministers are moving to consolidate the continent's voice and its influence. During the World Health Summit Regional Meeting, Ministers convened for the launch of the African High-Level Ministerial Committee (AHLMC) on Global Health Architecture Reform, led by the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

The Committee brings together political leadership from across the continent to coordinate engagement in global reform processes, align negotiating positions, and ensure Africa speaks with clarity and collective authority.

The launch comes as global institutions advance significant reform efforts, spanning the Pandemic Agreement, International Health Regulations, UN80-linked reforms, and wider financing debates. With ongoing global health architecture discussions addressing power imbalances, country and regional health sovereignty, integration, and inclusivity, the timing carries particular urgency.

Last year, Official Development Assistance fell by **23.1%**, making it the most severe single-year contraction in history. With further reductions expected this year, health systems that were already stretched are now being asked to absorb mounting shocks while simultaneously contending with a shrinking fiscal space. Against this backdrop, the AHLMC represents a strategic shift, from fragmented engagement to coordinated action.

Speaking at the launch, H.E. Dr Jean Kaseya, Director General of Africa CDC, was clear about what the Committee represents. *"Africa cannot continue to be a passive recipient of global health decisions. This Committee is about power, voice, and ownership, ensuring that Africa acts collectively and shapes the systems that determine our future."*

Embedding women, children and adolescents in reform efforts

The Global Leaders Network has long held that no reform of the global health architecture is complete without explicitly protecting and advancing women's, children's and adolescents' health. Monday's launch offered a moment of convergence between the priorities of GLN Member States and those of the newly established African High-Level Ministerial Committee.

Somalia's Minister, Hon. Dr. Ali Haji Adam, drawing on his experience as a participant in WHO Executive Board discussions on health system reform, commended the GLN and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health for their continued commitment to keeping these issues on the global agenda.

"For countries like Somalia, this is not a theoretical discussion. It is about how global systems translate into real service delivery on the ground, particularly for the most vulnerable, including women, children and adolescents, and especially in fragile, climate-affected, and resource-constrained settings. We want to recognise the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and the Global Leaders Network for continuing to prioritise these issues." said the Minister.

South Africa's Minister of Health, Hon. Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, echoed these remarks, pointing to the strengthened political will across the continent and the responsibility that comes with it. *"We have seen Africa's political will rise through our Heads of State and Government, from the great pandemics of HIV and COVID to the Global Leaders Network, and more recently, Tanzania's AU Championship on Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health. We must leverage these gains, turning fragility into resilience, ensuring pandemic financing does not bypass our institutions, and securing life-saving technologies through regional manufacturing."* noted Minister Motsoaledi.

The AHLMC work spans five thematic workstreams:

- Leadership reform and governance
- Financial sovereignty
- Data sovereignty and digitalisation
- Product sovereignty and local manufacturing
- Pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response

Across these workstreams, the Committee will help define a consolidated African reform platform, coordinate ministerial engagement, develop guidance on common negotiating positions, and support reforms that strengthen African representation, reduce duplication, align financing, and reinforce continental institutions.

Expected outputs include a consolidated African Position Paper on global health architecture reform, a Reform Roadmap covering 2026 to 2030, engagement packages for priority global negotiations, and a Financing Alignment and Mutual Accountability Framework built on the principle of one plan, one budget, and one report.