

**Joint Statement by the Board Chairs of the Friends Network on the  
Global Fund's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
24 September 2021**

The Board Chairs of Friends of the Global Fund Europe, Japan and U.S. as well as the President of the Board of the Fund for the Global Fund (FGF) unite across the globe to celebrate the unprecedented achievements of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria on the occasion of its 20th anniversary and commit to redoubling efforts to bring those diseases to an end.

The Global Fund was established in 2002, at the height of the AIDS epidemic, as an innovative multilateral partnership comprised of governments, civil society, technical agencies, the private sector and people affected by the diseases. The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded the world of the dire threat of infectious diseases, providing an important opportunity to galvanize support for the Global Fund in fighting HIV, TB and malaria and responding effectively to new disease threats.

*"The 20th anniversary is a moment to celebrate the millions of lives that the Global Fund partnership has saved. We are acutely aware, however, that our fight against the three diseases is far from over and that COVID-19 has added further challenges. We will persist in this fight together with the Global Fund,"* said Hon. Motohisa Furukawa, Co-Chair, Friends of the Global Fund, Japan (FGFJ), Member of the House of Representatives (Democratic Party for the People, Japan).

Since its establishment, the Global Fund has played an instrumental role in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria. Health programs supported by the Global Fund partnership had saved 44 million lives as of the end of 2020. Overall, yearly deaths caused by AIDS, TB and malaria have been reduced by 46% since 2002 in countries where the Global Fund invests. Nevertheless, as detailed in the Global Fund's 2021 Result Report<sup>1</sup>, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the fight against HIV, TB and malaria has been significant, and for the first time in its history, key programmatic results have gone backwards.

*"Twenty years ago, millions of people were dying of diseases that were preventable and treatable. The Global Fund was born out of a refusal to accept this outrage as normal. Since then, the Global Fund has harnessed the power of governments, communities, civil society and the private sector to save 44 million lives and create stronger, more resilient health systems. During a global pandemic, these health systems have become more critical than ever and are helping low-income countries respond more effectively to COVID-19. Over the last two decades, the Global Fund has shown the world what can be achieved if there is shared commitment and political will."*, Dr. Jeffrey L. Sturchio, Board Chair, Friends of the Global Fight against AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria

As the world is now faced with a new pandemic, we need sustained and reinforced efforts in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria, as well as a plan to address the knock-on impact of COVID-19 on disease responses and health and community systems across the world.

*"COVID-19 has reminded us of the importance of the Global Fund, including its role in strengthening health and community systems in low- to middle- income countries. Friends of the Global Fund, Japan (FGFJ) is proud to have partnered with the Global Fund since 2004, and is committed to continuing our partnership to see an*

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/11304/corporate\\_2021resultsreport\\_report\\_en.pdf](https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/11304/corporate_2021resultsreport_report_en.pdf)

*end to the three diseases as well as to prepare to respond to future pandemics,”* said Hon. Ichiro Aisawa, Co-Chair, FGFJ, Member of the House of Representatives (Liberal Democratic Party, Japan).

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Global Fund has implemented agile and rapid measures since March 2020. These measures not only mitigated the impact of COVID-19 on HIV, TB and malaria, but also supported health systems in partner countries. As of August 2021, the Global Fund has approved US\$3.3 billion to 107 countries and 16 multi-country programs, supporting country responses to COVID-19 with critical tests, treatments and medical supplies; protecting front-line health workers; adapting lifesaving HIV, TB and malaria programs; and reinforcing fragile systems for health.

The Global Fund’s achievements to date have been made possible by the very nature of its partnership, founded on country ownership and community leadership. Backed by donor and implementing countries, with an innovative governance and implementation structure, the Global Fund engages and supports affected communities. The Global Fund also tackles human rights, gender-related barriers and health systems weaknesses that drive new infections and deaths. This unique model made it possible for the Global Fund’s grants to reach stigmatized, marginalized and criminalized groups most hit by the three diseases. In many ways, it is a model of how effective global health programming can be achieved and delivered not only to respond to end today’s epidemics, but also to address future pandemics and health threats in a sustainable, inclusive and rights-based way.

*“The Global Fund is the best instrument we have to fight pandemics and it should be a driving force of the change to design a new Global Health architecture and to be better prepared to future pandemics without giving up to go faster towards the end of HIV, TB and malaria. Its experience with HIV, TB and Malaria, its inclusive multilateral governance, its extensive network of partners and its responsiveness are key determinants for a better response to future pandemics,”* said Laurent Vigier, President of Friends of the Global Fund Europe.

While substantial progress has been achieved in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria since the establishment of the Global Fund in 2001, a long road ahead remains to achieve the ambitious target of ending these epidemics by 2030.

*“While we celebrate progress achieved in the past 20 years in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria thanks to the mobilization of the Global Fund partnership, we must take stock of the devastation that the Covid-19 pandemic has wrought. So many lives lost, and already fragile health and community systems overrun with demand. But we also see an opportunity to galvanize donors in a renewed effort to bring the HIV, TB, and malaria pandemics under control while at the same time building resilient health systems that can detect and respond rapidly to emerging threats,”* said Todd Summers, President of the Board, Fund for the Global Fund.

As the Global Fund celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, it is also preparing for its 7<sup>th</sup> Replenishment planned to take place in November 2022. To achieve these targets in the current challenging environment, the Friends of the Global Fund Europe, Japan, and U.S., as well as Fund for the Global Fund, call for sustained joint commitment from the international community to support the Global Fund’s mission.