



# statement

## **Biopharmaceutical CEO joins new antibiotic resistance fighting United Nations group to help boost urgent action on looming superbugs public health crisis**

20 November 2020, The World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health announced today the creation of the One Health Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance ([Global Leaders Group](#)). This new United Nations high-level group will include Kenneth Frazier, Chairman of the board and chief executive officer at MSD, whose company is a member of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA). The Global Leaders Group has been established to advocate for urgent action to combat the threat of antimicrobial resistance and the IFPMA welcomes the opportunity for the pharmaceutical industry to be directly represented alongside other key stakeholders including heads of state, government ministers, and leaders of civil society organizations.

Superbugs that are resistant to existing antibiotics already take an enormous toll on health-care systems around the world. About 700,000 people globally die each year due to antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Without strong action to ensure appropriate use of existing antibiotics, as well as new and better treatments, that figure could rise to ten million by 2050.

The biopharmaceutical industry has been advocating for long needed action to avert accelerating crisis of drug resistance; but it has been a first mover in addressing some of the challenges. In July 2020, the new AMR Action Fund was launched, stepping in to save the collapsing antibiotic pipeline with pharmaceutical industry investment of US\$1 billion. AMR Action Fund aims to bring two to four novel antibiotics to the market by 2030 and is one of the largest and most ambitious collaborative initiatives ever undertaken by the pharmaceutical industry to respond to a global public health threat. The biopharmaceutical industry has also joined forces with the diagnostics, generics and biotech industries through the [AMR Industry Alliance](#), a unique 100 member strong life-science industry group established in 2017. This group's achievements include a breakthrough in the responsible manufacturing of antibiotics and positive steps to improve how patients access and use antibiotics.

*“Antimicrobial resistance remains an urgent threat to all of us, both during this pandemic and beyond, and we all must do our part – as individuals, as organizations, and as a global community. I am honored to represent MSD and the research-based biopharmaceutical industry on the One Health Global Leaders Group. This partnership is an exemplar of the multi-sectoral collaboration and One Health approach that are necessary to accelerate progress against the critical issue of antimicrobial resistance.”* Said Kenneth Frazier, Chairman of the board and chief executive officer at MSD.

Welcoming in Frazier's appointment, IFPMA Director-General, Thomas Cueni said: *“We are delighted to see Kenneth Frazier bring his unique expertise to this group. AMR is a looming global crisis that has the potential to dwarf COVID-19 in terms of deaths and economic costs. Tackling AMR requires a fundamental change in how society values new antibiotics, and government incentives that reward companies for successfully developing them. This year MSD is one of over 20 biopharmaceutical companies that have invested in the AMR Action Fund. Frazier's appointment will hopefully help us move from talk to action.”*