

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security & NTI sponsor the side event on

**THE VALUE OF A GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY INDEX IN REDUCING THE THREAT
POSED BY EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

**Prince Mahidol Awards Conference, Bangkok, Thailand
Room: Lotus Suite 5
Centara Grand at CentralWorld Hotel**

**30 January, 2018
11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

During this side event, panelists will engage in an interactive dialogue about the Global Health Security (GHS) Index. The purpose of a GHS Index is to create a national-level assessment, which can be applied to all countries, drawing on publicly available information, and measured by an independent non-governmental entity. The GHS Index draws from internationally-accepted technical assessments including the World Health Organization's International Health Regulations Joint External Evaluation and the World Organization for Animal Health's Performance of Veterinary Services Pathway. The project team anticipates that a regularly produced GHS Index will serve as a tool for country governments, development banks, and donors to more systematically prioritize financing to fill vital gaps in country capability to prevent, detect, and respond to biological events before they can spread or lead to cascading and further destabilizing effects.

Anita Cicero, Deputy Director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, will moderate the panel. Panelists include:

- **Mukesh Chawla**, *Adviser for Health, Nutrition and Population at the World Bank Group and the Coordinator of the Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility*
- **Scott Dowell**, *Deputy Director for Surveillance and Epidemiology at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*
- **Julius Lutwama (invited)**, *Senior Principal Research Officer, Ministry of Health, Government of Uganda & Head of the Department of Arbovirology, Emerging and Re-Emerging Viral Infectious Diseases, Uganda Virus Research Institute*
- **Elizabeth Cameron**, *Vice President, Global Biological Policy and Programs, NTI*
- **Jennifer Nuzzo**, *Senior Scholar, Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security*

About the Global Health Security Index Project

Recent infectious disease outbreaks – including the Zika virus in the Americas, the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, MERS-CoV in the Middle East, and pandemic influenza – have exposed the challenges countries face in preventing, detecting, and responding to biological threats. Without adequate measures to address public health emergencies, outbreaks can rapidly cost thousands of lives and billions in economic loss, threatening global peace and security.

The history of international efforts to improve countries' capacity to address outbreaks underscores the challenges in improving and maintaining disease control. In 2005, the World Health Organization (WHO) updated the International Health Regulations (IHR) to require countries to be prepared for global public health emergencies. However, by 2012, only approximately 20% of the 194 WHO member states were able to report IHR compliance. To accelerate progress, the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) was launched in 2014 to establish common goals to reduce the spread and impact of infectious diseases. All GHSA-participating countries were asked to make specific commitments to identify and fill gaps, and G-7 leaders have agreed to assist 76 countries and regions. In addition, drawing from the GHSA, the WHO launched the Joint External Evaluations (JEE) as voluntary peer assessments of country capability and capacity to implement the IHR. The JEE is a critical process, and the international community should continue to strongly support it.

Despite clear progress over the past three years, much remains to be done to fill gaps and establish accountability for commitments.

The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) and the Center for Health Security (CHS) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health believe that a Global Health Security (GHS) Index informed by international expert judgment, measured by a non-governmental entity, and made publicly available could highlight current needs on a global basis and boost compliance with the IHR. An Index also could promote dialogue around commitments, public-private partnerships to assist countries, and independent monitoring and oversight.

NTI and CHS, in partnership with the Economist Intelligence Unit, are pursuing development of such an index to provide a public benchmarking of global health security conditions—building on the JEE and informed by an international expert advisory group. The GHS Index will seek to motivate regular commitments, financing and accountability, influence government decision-making on an ongoing basis, and – ultimately – help to improve pandemic preparedness. In consultation with an international panel of experts that includes 15 widely respected scientists and public health experts from 12 countries, international organizations, and the World Bank, the project team has developed a framework of national indicators for health security to assess countries' technical, financial, and political capabilities to prevent, detect, and respond to epidemics with international implications.

We have approached the development of a GHS Index with the following assumptions: 1) it remains vital to regularly conduct and widely publish an external and truly independent assessment that can be applied equally to all countries; 2) the GHS Index assessment must be based on publicly available data; and 3) the GHS Index framework should include a broad set of criteria to encompass the interplay between health security, political and socio-economic risk factors, and the broader healthcare system.

Through a recurring GHS Index, the project team seeks to: stimulate political will and create accountability for new and continuing health security investments and provide trend information over time; highlight the need for leaders to place a continued priority on global health security; increase international financing for national plans to fill identified gaps; recognize countries that have taken concrete actions to improve their own capacity and, in turn, improve global security; and motivate countries to undertake follow-on work to address shortcomings in current health security capabilities.

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security's mission is to protect people's health from the consequences of epidemics and disasters by conducting research and making policy recommendations. Center researchers study the organizations, systems, and tools essential to preventing and responding to public health crises.

The Nuclear Threat Initiative works to protect our lives, environment, and quality of life now and for future generations. We work to prevent catastrophic attacks with weapons of mass destruction and disruption (WMDD)—nuclear, biological, radiological, chemical, and cyber. Founded in 2001 by former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn and philanthropist Ted Turner, NTI is guided by a prestigious, international board of directors. Ernest J. Moniz serves as chief executive officer and co-chairman; Des Browne is vice chairman; and Joan Rohlfing serves as president.