

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), addressed parliamentarians at the 148th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly on March 25th, 2024.

During his speech, he emphasized the critical role parliaments play in advancing global health and urged their support on two key issues.

Finalizing a Global Pandemic Response Plan: Dr. Tedros stressed the urgency of finalizing a global agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response.

This treaty, expected to be completed by the World Health Assembly in May 2024, aims to strengthen international cooperation and preparedness for future health emergencies.

He emphasized that learning from the devastating effects of COVID-19 is crucial to ensure the world is better equipped to handle upcoming health crises.

Supporting Universal Health Coverage (UHC): Dr. Tedros called for renewed collaboration on achieving UHC, which guarantees everyone access to the healthcare they need without facing financial hardship.

Additionally, he highlighted a newly signed Memorandum of Understanding between WHO and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) that prioritizes UHC as a core focus area.

Dr. Tedros also addressed the spread of misinformation surrounding the proposed pandemic treaty. He firmly rejected claims that the treaty would undermine national sovereignty. Instead, he explained its purpose as a collaborative effort to strengthen global health security.

He urged parliamentarians to be well-informed and counter the spread of false information that could jeopardize public health in the future.

“We urge parliaments to understand these issues and support the ongoing negotiations,” Dr. Tedros stated. “The pandemic agreement is a cornerstone for building a stronger global health security architecture, a project WHO is undertaking with its member states.”