

## Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family

The governments of the Brazil, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, Uganda and the United States cosponsored a virtual October 22, 2020 gathering in Washington, D.C. for a multinational ceremonial signing of the Geneva Consensus Declaration (so-called because it was intended to occur in Geneva before the live meeting of the World Health Assembly was postponed due to COVID-19). This Declaration further strengthens the coalition to achieve these four pillars: (1) better health for women, (2) the preservation of human life, (3) strengthening of family as the foundational unit of society, and (4) protecting every nation's national sovereignty in global politics. For example, it is the sovereign right of every nation to make their own laws in regard to abortion, absent external pressure.



We believe that finding genuine solutions to health concerns should be a priority uniting Member States. This Declaration charts a positive way forward for accelerating progress on achieving this end.

**The Declaration remains open for additional signatures. Contact [jointstatement@hhs.gov](mailto:jointstatement@hhs.gov) for more information.**

Promoting Women's Health Around the World...



*Promoting Women's Health Around the World. Together we are stronger.*

### Geneva Consensus Declaration

## GENEVA CONSENSUS DECLARATION ON PROMOTING WOMEN'S HEALTH AND STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

— October 22, 2020 —

*We, ministers and high representatives of Governments,*

Having intended to gather on the margins of the 2020 World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland to review progress made and challenges to uphold the right to the highest attainable standards of health for women; to promote women's essential contribution to health, and strength of the family and of a successful and flourishing society; and to express the essential priority of protecting the right to life, committing to coordinated efforts in multilateral fora, despite our inability to meet in Geneva due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, in solidarity, we

1. Reaffirm "all are equal before the law," and "human rights of women are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms";
2. Emphasize "the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights," as well as economic, social, and cultural rights; and the "equal rights, opportunities and access to resources and equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their well-being and that of their families"; and that "women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, economic resources, and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels";
3. Reaffirm the inherent "dignity and worth of the human person," that "every human being has the inherent right to life," and the commitment "to enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant";
4. Emphasize that "in no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning" and that "any measures or changes related to abortion within the health system can only be determined at the national or local level according to the national legislative process"; Reaffirms that "the child... needs special safeguards and care... before as well as after birth" and "special measures of protection and assistance should be taken on behalf of all children," based on the principle of the best interest of the child;
5. Reaffirms that "the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State," that "motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance," that "women play a critical role in the family" and women's "contribution to the welfare of the family and to the development of society";
6. Recognize that "universal health coverage is fundamental for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals related not only to health and well-being," with further recognition that "health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" due "the predominant focus of health-care systems on treating illness rather than maximizing optimal health also prevents a holistic approach," and that there are "needs that exist at different stages in an individual's lifespan," which together support optimal health across the life course, entailing the provision of the necessary information, skills, and care for achieving the best possible health outcomes and reaching full human potential; and
7. Reaffirms the importance of national ownership and the primary role and responsibility of governments at all levels to determine their own path towards achieving universal health coverage, in accordance with national contexts and priorities, preserving human dignity and all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Furthermore, we, the representatives of our sovereign nations do hereby declare in mutual friendship and respect, our commitment to work together to:

- Ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and equal opportunity for women at all levels of political, economic, and public life;
- Improve and secure access to health and development gains for women, including sexual and reproductive health, which must always promote optimal health, the highest attainable standard of health, without including abortion;
- Reaffirms that there is no international right to abortion, nor any international obligation on the part of States to finance or facilitate abortion, consistent with the long-standing international consensus that each nation has the sovereign right to implement programs and activities consistent with their laws and policies;
- Build our health system capacity and mobilize resources to implement health and development programs that address the needs of women and children in situations of vulnerability and advance universal health coverage;
- Advance supportive public health policies for women and girls as well as families, including building our healthcare capacity and mobilizing resources within our own countries, bilaterally, and in multilateral fora;
- Support the role of the family as foundational to society and as a source of health, support, and care; and
- Engage across the UN system to realize these universal values, recognizing that individually we are strong, but together we are stronger.

## COSPONSORS

*Federative Republic of Brazil Arab Republic of Egypt Hungary  
Republic of Indonesia Republic of Uganda United States of America*

## Geneva Consensus Declaration – English - PDF

### Translations of the Declaration in Different Languages

- [Geneva Consensus Declaration – Arabic - PDF](#)
- [Geneva Consensus Declaration – French - PDF](#)
- [Geneva Consensus Declaration – Russian - PDF](#)
- [Geneva Consensus Declaration – Spanish - PDF](#)

### Geneva Consensus Declaration Cosigners

The following 32 countries signed the Geneva Consensus Declaration on October 22, 2020, representing over 1.6 billion people and every region of the world.

*Note:* Those countries in bold are the Declaration leading co-sponsors.

1. Kingdom of Bahrain
2. Republic of Belarus
3. Republic of Benin
4. **Federative Republic of Brazil (cosponsor)**
5. Burkina Faso
6. Republic of Cameroon
7. Democratic Republic of the Congo

8. Republic of the Congo
9. Republic of Djibouti
0. **Arab Republic of Egypt (cosponsor)**
1. Kingdom of Eswatini
2. Republic of The Gambia
3. Republic of Haiti
4. **Hungary (cosponsor)**
5. **Republic of Indonesia (cosponsor)**
6. Republic of Iraq
7. Republic of Kenya
8. State of Kuwait
9. State of Libya
0. Republic of Nauru
1. Republic of Niger
2. Sultanate of Oman
3. Islamic Republic of Pakistan
4. Republic of Poland
5. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
6. Republic of Senegal
7. Republic of South Sudan
8. Republic of Sudan
9. **Republic of Uganda (cosponsor)**
0. United Arab Emirates
1. **United States of America (cosponsor)**
2. Republic of Zambia

## Additional Videos

## Ceremonial Signing of the Geneva Consensus Declaration | October 22, 2020



*Ceremonial Signing of the Geneva Consensus Declaration | October 22, 2020*

The virtual international ceremonial signing of the Geneva Consensus Declaration, cohosted by Secretaries Alex Azar and Mike Pompeo and cosponsored by the governments of Brazil, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, Uganda, and the United States was held on October 22 at 11 am EST. The Geneva Consensus Declaration strengthens the resolve to achieve these four pillars: (1) better health for women, (2) the preservation of human life, (3) strengthening of the family as the foundational unit of society, and (4) protecting every nation's national sovereignty in global politics. This event charts a positive way forward for accelerating progress and will be a celebration of partnership between the many countries gathered.

## Azar/Pompeo Summary of Ceremonial Signing of the Geneva Consensus Declaration | October 22, 20...



*Sec. Azar and Sec. Pompeo talk about the importance of the Geneva Consensus Declaration and its ceremonial signing on October 22, 2020*

## Official Statements

- [Trump Administration Marks the Signing of the Geneva Consensus Declaration, October 22, 2020](#)
- [Secretary Michael R. Pompeo With Secretary Alex M. Azar II At the Signing Ceremony of the Geneva Consensus Declaration, October 22, 2020](#)

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