Special Session

Health Diplomacy in a Changing World

Date December 5, 2025
Time 5:00-6:15 p.m.
Venue HYATT REGENCY TOKYO
27F, Excellence
(2-7-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku, Tokyo)

Speakers



Dr. Anders Nordström
Karolinska Institute and Stockholm School of Economics
Sweden



Dr. Magda Robalo
Institute for Global Health and Development
Guinea-Bissau



Prof. Ren Minghui
Peking University
China



Prof. Kayo Takuma
Keio University
Japan

Background of the Session

This session is organized on the sideline of the UHC High-level Forum. The session aims to exchange views on the significance of health diplomacy and discuss its future challenges and directions, in the light of recent major shifts in the global health architecture.

INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY RESEARCH

JIHS
Japan Institute for Health Security

Funded by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Scientific Research Grant.

Contact
Global Health Diplomacy Secretariat
E-mail: ighp_ghd@jihs.go.jp

Dr. Anders Nordström

Anders Nordström is the former Swedish Ambassador for Global Health (2010-23). He is a medical doctor and completed his studies at the Karolinska Institute. Today he is an advisor affiliated with the Karolinska Institute and the Stockholm School of Economics. He leads the Partnership for International Politics and Diplomacy for Health and is the Program Director for the Executive Program on International Politics and Diplomacy for Health for Emerging Leaders.
He is currently a member of the board of the Alliance for Health Systems Research's, is a member of the NUS-Lancet PRIME Commission, chairs the International Vaccine Institute Global Advisory Group of Experts, and serves on the Virchow Foundation for Global Health Council. And recently he has joined the Academic Board of the Institute of Public Health and Governance at NIMS University Jaipur, India. He led the Secretariat for The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (2020-21) and remains an active contributor to the Panel's continued work.
At the World Health Organization, he served as Acting Director-General (May 2006 – January 2007) and as Assistant Director General for General Management (2003-2006), and Assistant Director General for Health Systems and Services (2007). He was Head of the WHO Country Office in Sierra Leone (2015-17) during the Ebola outbreak.
As the Interim Executive Director, he established the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria as a legal entity in 2002 and led the secretariat during the GFATM's first 6 months.
He has previously served as board member of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, the GAVI Alliance, UNAIDS and the Partnership for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health and chaired a number of international working groups and processes. He was the Director-General for the Swedish International Agency for Development Cooperation (2007-2010).

Dr. Magda Robalo

Dr Magda Robalo is a former Minister of Health of Guinea-Bissau. Before joining Government, as Minister of Health in 2019, she led the WHO Department of Communicable Diseases in the African Region, where she boldly advanced unconventional approaches by establishing an integrated HIV/AIDS and TB Cluster, initiating the Hepatitis Control Program, launching a special initiative to eliminate neglected tropical diseases and carefully ensured competent women were recruited for the Department.
An Adjunct Professor at Griffith University, she is a Co-Chair of the UHC2030 Steering Committee and a Global Ambassador of the G7 &G20 Health and Development Partnership. She was the Head of WHO Country Offices in Ghana and Namibia, leading diplomatic, policy and technical efforts to promote health, strengthen health systems and control diseases. Magda Robalo is the President of the Institute for Global Health and Development, a global organization based in Guinea-Bissau.

Prof. Ren Minghui

Professor REN Minghui, at the Department of Global Health in the School of Public Health, Peking University (PKU). He is the Director of Institute for Global Heath PKU, the Director of China Center for Health Development Studies PKU, the Director and Chief Expert of Beijing Institute for Health Development PKU, the Director of the Key Laboratory of Health System Reform and Governance, National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China, and the Director of World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Universal Health Center Beijing, China,
Prof Ren graduated from Xi'an Medical University, Harvard School of Public Health, and Peking University with his PhD. He has been served in the various positions in the Chinese government, including the Director General of International Health Cooperation in the Ministry of Health and National Health and Family Planning Commission China. From 2016 to 2022, Prof Ren worked as the Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) for Universal Health Coverage/Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases. He has multi-year experience serving in the executive boards of the World Health Organization, the UNAIDS, Unitaid, and The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Prof. Kayo Takuma

Kayo Takuma is a Professor at the Faculty of Law, Keio University, Japan She received her master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Tokyo. She served as a Professor at the Faculty of Law, Tokyo Metropolitan University from April 2015 through March 2024, and has been in her current position since April 2024. For one year from March 2023, she was a visiting researcher at École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in France. Her main research interest involves the origins, historical developments, and current challenges of global health governance, with a focus on its relationship with the changing international political order. In this regard, she has been involved in several projects, including health diplomacy in G7 countries, the architecture of the global health governance that has become multi-layered under the influence of political divisions, and an Asian-European comparative study of intra-regional health cooperation. Some of her recent publications include "The Far-Eastern Bureau of the League of Nations: Linking the Regional and International Orders Through Health Work" (in Christopher R. Hughes et Hatsue Shinohara (eds.), *East Asians in the League of Nations: Actors, Empires and Regions in Early Global Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan; Singapore, 2023), and "Global Solidarity is Necessary to End the COVID-19 Pandemic" (in *Asia Pacific Review*, 27-2, 2020). She has been a member of the G7 2016 Global Health Working Group as well as the Deputy Director of the Hiroshima G7 Global Health Task Force.