

# House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS82)

## Department of Health and Social Care

Written Statement made by: **Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Preet Kaur Gill)**  
on 03 Jun 2026.

### **Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing negotiations**

I would like to update the House regarding the ongoing negotiations at the World Health Organization's (WHO) Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) to secure an Annex to the Pandemic Agreement on a new Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing (PABS) system.

This Government's last update to the House was on 2 February. Since then, the IGWG held three rounds of negotiations, including a resumed session, ahead of the deadline of the 79th World Health Assembly (WHA) to report on the outcome of negotiations.

Some good progress was made at these IGWG meetings, including on issues such as key definitions and use of terms, and the governance of the PABS system. However divergence still remained on several key issues, including on how pathogen samples and genetic sequence information will be shared through laboratory networks and databases to ensure timely access; benefit-sharing provisions for manufacturers who choose to sign up to the system; and the links between PABS and other international access and benefit sharing frameworks.

Given the number of complex and highly technical issues to resolve, the IGWG decided that additional negotiating time is needed. Member States therefore submitted a recommendation for an extension to negotiations to the 79<sup>th</sup> WHA, seeking approval for an additional one year of negotiating time. On 22 May, the WHA approved this extension. The deadline for the IGWG to submit the final outcome of the negotiations has now been extended to the 80th WHA, to be held in May 2027, or, as may be necessary, earlier by a special session of the WHA in 2026. The next round of negotiations will be held in mid-July.

The UK remains fully committed to securing a PABS Annex that serves both the UK and global public health, and we support this extension to provide more time for Member States to reach consensus. It is crucial that we continue our essential work to conclude the PABS Annex, so that the Pandemic Agreement can be opened for signature and ratification by Member States, and the wider benefits for pandemic prevention and response can be realised.

This Government will only agree to a PABS Annex that is in the national as well as global interest, and we will continue to engage constructively in the process to deliver an effective, implementable, and equitable PABS system.