



Statement by H.E. Bob Rae (Canada)

President of the Economic and Social Council

High-Level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance

26 September 2024

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Dear friends,

I want to join in the congratulations to my colleagues, Francois Jackman and Vanessa Frazier, for their leadership and co-facilitation on what is a challenging issue, and I think we all understand that it took a lot of work and flexibility and willingness to engage on all sides to produce this political declaration.

I also want to extend special acknowledgment, as others have done and no doubt will do, to Prime Minister Motley. This is an issue that she and I discussed in Barbados two years ago, and she let me know why it was a subject of great personal concern to her.

Prime Minister Motley, your passion, which is well known to all of us, has helped to build the public recognition of the extent of this problem.

Simply put, our reliance on certain ways of dealing with disease and dealing with the challenges of life have now created their own problem. We know what it is, but dealing with it is not easy because it requires, as the President has said so well, the movement of the whole of society, of how we do things, how we raise animals, how we protect public health, how we ensure that we put the health of humans as well as animals at the forefront of what we're trying to do.



The work we're doing we're doing at the same time as we have a deep division in the world, an inequality that affects all societies and an inequality that means people don't have access to all the technology they need to deal with the problem. But as the President said earlier, there are five million people dying because of this problem, and that's why it affects everyone.

What is our greatest strength in the face of a global health threat such as antimicrobial resistance, which we all refer to as AMR, is one word, and that is solidarity. It is a solidarity that requires wealthier countries to understand that poor countries do not have the same access to technology as we do.

It is imperative that we understand a need to share capacity, and the capacity that must be present in every corner of the world for us to be able to address this question. And that is why the economic and social framework of this discussion, quite apart from the technical discussion that's required, is so important for us to make sure there is access to antimicrobials and alternative therapeutic treatments that are consistently of high quality.

We need affordable and effective diagnostics to ensure we're providing the right treatment for the right disease at the right time. We also need prevention and control measures to address the risk and the spread of infections, and immunization strategies to reduce the need for antimicrobials in the first place. It's a comprehensive strategy that's required.

We know that climate change and the environment play a significant role in the development and the spread and transmission of AMR. My colleague from UNEP will be talking directly about this question. As we look at increase in temperatures and historic climate events, these create the conditions in which micro-organisms can thrive, and that only exacerbates the challenge and the problem, which is why



there has to be so much joint action and great effort on the part of all involved.

Wish you well in your endeavors. I can assure you that ECOSOC remains ready, willing, and able to give this issue the prominence and the focus that it requires. We wish you well in your deliberations today.

If I leave, it's because « la diplomatie, ce n'est pas la guerre, c'est la gare » (Diplomacy is not war, it's the train station). There's one train coming and there's another train going, and sometimes we have to catch the next train, but thank you very much for the opportunity to speak and thank you for allowing me to share some words with you today.

Thank you.