

WHO Academy groundbreaking

Virtual Press conference 27 September 2021

Speaker key:

TR	Translator
UF	Unidentified female speaker
TAG	Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
NO	Dr Nelson Olim
EM	Emmanuel Macron
DA	Dr Said Abdi
MA	Dr Marina Kalogradaki
AZ	Dr Ayalu Zawadi

00:00:00

TR Geneva and we're in contact with Geneva at the moment. I would like to say hi to all of those who are on the WHO network. Without further ado we will be showing you a film which presents the Academy.

[Video plays]

TR Emmanuel Macron, the French President, and Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the WHO.

[Pause]

An academy in the heart of the city but open to the world which will be at the service of global priorities which will be for all. This is the promise that has been made to you and to us and the messages that we will be conveying in the course of this ceremony.

We will begin by listening to local elected officials who are closely involved in this project and have been since the beginning. First of all the mayor of Lyon, Gregory Doucet, who is also the Chair of the Lyon Public Hospitals, the [French language].

00:03:40

President, Sir, Director-General of the WHO, Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Minister of Solidarity and Health, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Ambassadors, Excellencies, Executive Director of the WHO Academy, Prefect of the Rhone region, Members of Parliament, President of the Regional Council Auvergne Rhone-Alpes, President of the Lyon Metropolitan Area, Madame Architect, ladies and gentlemen, it is obviously a great honour to be here today before you as Mayor of Lyon and to take the floor to express the joy and huge satisfaction of our town to see the creation of the WHO Academy which is to be based in Lyon.

I share this joy with everybody here, with Georges Henicot, who from the very start has been closely involved in this project. The Academy will enable us to achieve faster EU and sustainable development goals for health, to make knowledge more accessible and to strengthen worldwide skills through further training, high-quality and the best degree of excellence.

The citizens of Lyon are delighted that this project is coming to fruition. It is an ambitious project for the WHO but also for us, for the Lyon metropolitan region, for the region as a whole, for the whole country and for the planet.

00:05:51

As of now we will be training in Lyon every year in a building which is cutting-edge in terms of sustainability. As I was saying, we will be training tens of thousands of healthcare professionals who come from all over the world or who are online and we will be able to train tens of millions more.

We will be issuing guidelines to decision-makers on the basis of hardcore scientific evidence and at last we will also be able to speak to the general public. The general public works best in the interest of their own health when they understand better so we will reach out to them and we've set up a citizens' council to respond to COVID.

There were warnings from the WHO about pandemic fatigue and we have all experienced this. This was our response. Lyon, like Geneva, will be contributing to global health. This is a fine project, one that fills us with enthusiasm.

Health is a common good of humanity. We know all too well at the current time illnesses do not care about walls or borders, they do not pay any attention to them and the whole concept of one health that takes into account the interdependence between human, animal and environmental health in all countries, everywhere in the world has never been as relevant as it is today.

00:07:49

We need to flesh it out and bring it to fulfilment. This approach applies that there are many forms of co-operation and Lyon hopes to be the capital of co-operation. Necessarily we have to have a broad overview of co-operation at all levels with an interlinking and dovetailing.

Lyon as the town is delighted to play a part in this venture. This is a role and a part that stems from its history because Lyon has always been a pioneering city in terms of medicine. We have countless hospital services and professors that have marked the course of human history through their work and their feats.

It is a town that is a driver for the pharmaceutical industry, for technology and research and the bringing together of all areas where there are discoveries and applications in the area of healthcare innovation.

00:09:07

I would like to point out also that Lyon, because of its geographical location at the crossroads of thoroughfares has always played a part in history for good and for ill. It has had to overcome terrible epidemics but in the 20th century it really stood out in the fight against infection.

It is thanks to a Lyon-based company that medicines like sulphonamides and penicillin and streptomycin have been launched on the market. Streptomycin was the first antibiotic that was effective against tuberculosis.

Having reached this point in my speech I would like to think about the national veterinary services and close by... I think we now all have a full understanding of the importance of the man/animal interface and how careful and vigilant we have to be about this interface.

For more than a century our town has benefited from the presence of major pharmaceutical companies, companies that have played a key role at international level in many cases or others that are world leaders today and others that have been active at national level.

We also have universities and large research centres, health agencies. All of this goes to create an outstanding ecosystem for the sciences related to biology and medicine.

00:11:04

For 20 years now in Lyon we've already had a WHO bureau that's part of the head office at the WHO but we also have a centre on research into cancer, which is an outstanding organisation as well. All of this means that we're delighted to be able to participate in consolidating, intensifying and multiplying the relations that we already struck up with the WHO.

The WHO is a very valuable organisation. It is indispensable for global equilibrium. Having worked in the field of humanitarian aid I know how very important it is to foresee, to prevent and to prepare and to be ready. I am currently chair of the Lyon Public Hospitals and I would say that we should not forget either what we owe to public hospitals which provide care but also are centres of research and training.

I'm delighted that ties with the WHO are being strengthened through this new structure that is to be set up. This co-operation in fact has already been initiated, has already begun. As the Mayor of Lyon I would like on behalf of all the inhabitants of this duty to express my deep gratitude to all of those, the benefactors, the local authorities, the government, the partners that have made it possible for this academy to have a foothold in this city so longue vie to the WHO Academy.

Thank you very much. Now I'd like to give the floor to the Chairman of the Greater Lyon region, Mr Bruno Bernard [?].

Mr President, Mr Director of the WHO, Dr Tedros, Mr Minister, Members of Parliament, State Representatives and representatives of international organisations, Mr Mayor of Lyon, the Executive Director of the Academy, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, it's a pleasure for me to be able to share with you today the inaugural ceremony of the WHO Academy.

I should be at the Lyon Metropole to chair the council meeting but we are voting the subsidies of the Lyon Bureau for the WHO and we'll be voting for that. We also have as the owner of the building... We pledge additional financing for the construction of the building that has been [unclear] since the 60s.

I am only too happy about that completion of the project, which important for the WHO, for our country and for our territory. The Leon Metropole invested itself in bringing the Academy to Lyon. For over two years our teams dealt with the difficult aspects of the technicalities of the project. We changed the additional town planning and the planning scheme for the construction of the building, which we contributed €10 million to.

00:15:10

Over and above the engineering the Leon Metropolis also came in touch with the firemen from SD and IS [unclear] they mobilised their efforts to allow for the construction of a [unclear] test in [unclear]. In spite of the sanitary crisis this was completed at the end of 2020 and the first training sessions were just held recently.

The setting-up of the Academy in Lyon was something that came as obvious to us for its geographical proximity to Geneva so the synergy can develop with the different corporations, universities and academies in Lyon and in the region around it.

The bio-district in general counts over 50 corporations that now have to do with health measures, 5,000 jobs and many researchers and teachers. We have the Agency for National Security, the Agency for Security of Medication, many laboratories of international renown like the P4 lab and also the competitiveness hub for Lyon.

00:16:29

All of these stakeholders and players create and develop synergies and work for the benefit of the region, France and the rest of the world altogether and I believe that this strategy that the metropole has decided to implement since 2014 only contributes to that.

Let me give you a recent example of the success of a collaboration, a recreation of the VPH hub for animal and human health. This unique PPP brought together industrialists in the sector and players in training, in vet training and in human health, public institutions like the Lyon Metropole and the region of Rhone [unclear] the biopole around Lyon.

I'm also very happy that the Academy has been implemented here because it is an echo to our activity in health with massive investment, with the development of transportation for the use of bicycles and for the benefit of all including the most vulnerable populations.

It goes with support to agriculture, towards more green agriculture and to more green projects like the protection of natural territory, specialised stations [?], the protection of biodiversity to protect anything living.

00:18:01

Working together - which is something we're used to in Lyon - is probably what explained the choice of Lyon because this is consistent with the ambitions of our health ecosystem and this was supported by all of the public and private stakeholders in the region.

Some mobilised their efforts and even sponsored the project and I'd like to thank them for it. Sanofi in particular, [Unclear], Institut [Unclear]. These are among the generous donors. The WHO Academy is going to bolster the position of our metropole around the world for animal and human health and I can only imagine with great optimism the future discoveries and innovations in the field of health that we'll be able to provide with all of the stakeholders in our territory. Thank you very much.

Thank you very much for this message. I will now give the floor to the President of the Regional Council Auvergne Rhone-Alpes and that is Laurent Volki.

00:19:21

President, Director-General, ladies and gentlemen, members of international organisations and Excellencies, Ministers, President

Metropolitan Area, Mayor, elected officials, professors, healthcare professionals.

1974 and an epidemic in Brazil. Charles Merrier developed a vaccine in France and set up vaccination centres which saved 80,000 lives. He actually went out there. He vaccinated people himself and was confronted with the reality of global health that can only work if you don't just vaccinate but you set up infrastructure, you have healthcare professionals and managers and you train people to carry out the different tasks.

That says it all. It said the challenges of modern healthcare, your ambitions - Director-General, sir - and the fact that this Academy's going to be embedded in Lyon and our region. Before continuing I would like to thank Anna Melieu, who was the pillar of this project, and Georges [Unclear] and it's thanks to them that we can celebrate this academy today. It is a very exciting project.

It was launched before COVID but COVID has made it more topical than ever. Director, Sir, you say that you have been watching over this project as though it were your own child and that shows how important it is. We need to harmonise training of those who are going to be defending our health in the future. We need a framework that is visionary such as this one.

00:21:29

I think that it also highlights two dimensions that are vital for the challenges of the 21st century. The first is one health, which the Lyon ecosystem is very much aware of and also the idea that if we do not train our staff then none of this will be of any use at all.

This project really shows what a visionary you are. There are few international organisations that implement projects that lead to such huge advances in terms of the challenges, particularly health challenges of the future.

Disraeli, the Victorian British Prime Minister, said, I've always been suspicious of diplomacy and just words, it's actions that count when countries work together. We will be working together and I'm delighted that this is the case.

You have constantly been active, involved in this project so that it could advance and not get bogged down in the inevitable structural obstacles. I think that confrontations and arguments about whether to centralise or whether to devolve...

00:22:54

It's all too easy to get bogged down in that but we've seen beyond that and we've been able to work together at regional level with the town and

the region has taken on ownership of the building and is the main financial contributor to it along with the French Government.

This Academy is going to be in a building in this region and that counts for me, it's iconic. I say it's iconic because I'm convinced that if this project is to succeed it has to lead to a twofold understanding. It has to inspire the region but the region has to inspire the academy, it has to work both ways.

The Academy has to draw on the strengths of our region, which others have recalled. It's a very dynamic region which has a very supportive ecosystem. We have Insen [?], universities, research laboratories and many institutes. There's a site in Grenoble, the Drone region, Clermont-Ferrand.

In the broader regional context we have a very lively ecosystem. Public and private sectors work together hand-in-hand - Sanofi, Boehringer, Merck - but we also have lots of start-ups and SMEs, 40,000 people working in the healthcare sector and a multi-disciplinary approach.

00:24:20

Our region is one of the five leading regions in terms of private/public research, 10,000 researchers. And another aspect which counts a lot and is perhaps the key to the soul of the territory.

We have always had an international calling. Right from the start in the 19th century with industry and then further on in the 20th century Lyon has always understood that any health advance has to be made available to the whole world and we have to think in a global context.

What I hope is that this academy will have deep roots in this ecosystem but, a contrario, I'm convinced that our region must take inspiration from the Academy. We have 60,000 health students here. They can benefit from this huge asset of having the Academy in order to supplement their training.

We have a digital culture, we can help with e-learning and digitalisation that the Academy is very keen to implement and, yes, I know that you're very attached to this. I would like to express an additional wish, President, Sir, if you allow me to and I share this with many of the partners in the region.

00:25:45

Let's seize this marvellous opportunity, the WHO Academy, to build another brick. You have mentioned this. Why not have the global excellence cluster on infectious diseases and immunoinfectology? Let's have a cluster here to have all of the skills that meet the challenges which are anti-microbial resistance, respiratory diseases and emerging viruses.

We have everything here that would help us succeed. We have our hospitals, our universities, our research centres, our companies. Together we can do this. We can do this by being bold and taking on board the challenges of the future with artificial intelligence and nanotechnology for instance.

President, Sir, this would mean that we can work with the teaching hospital and also an innovation campus and together we can put together all of those bricks which would be a continuation of the WHO Academy.

Then we would really have taken this exciting project to its logical limits. As I said, we should draw inspiration from it and we should inspire it as well. This is a region that likes challenges. [Unclear] said as a joke, I wanted to vaccinate the children of the world but we began with cows. I understood that here the tradition is what underpins bold ventures.

00:27:27

We need to think in terms of our region but also in global terms at one and the same time. Thank you for giving us this wonderful opportunity.

Thank you very much for those three messages that expresses the synergy that all the bearers of the project will benefit from. We understand now that the Academy is part of the city and an emblem and a modern project for a city that is sustainable and connected at the same time.

I would want that this vision be incorporated into a building and here it is. We're going to talk about the building with the architect. Before that I would like to say that this ceremony is chaired by the President of the French Republic jointly with the Director of the World Health Organization.

UF Director-General, President Macron, you both have microphones so feel free to interact with the panellists at any time.

00:28:49

I will call Anne Rose, Architect, Atelier 234, to step up with us. Anne Rose, would you kindly tell us more about in which way you managed to meet the needs of the Academy?

When Ms [Unclear] and Dr Tedros asked us to think of every possible concept in architecture for the building our challenge was to find the kind of framework that would host at the same time a unique project bringing together people from all over the world and catering to the needs of healthcare for now and the future.

We had three objectives which were to create an academy that was open like a showcase, transmitting knowledge and cooperating in the transparency and the international dimension... the building and the World Health Organization.

Secondly, to create an academy that would be a tool for disseminating knowledge and at the same time be a sustainable academy.

Question; I understand the building will be completed in 2023, what's new about it?

00:30:04

What makes is building specific? Because we worked on it during lock-down, we worked on it together from our living rooms. We are going to have rooms for immersive learning. We're creating an environment that creates or simulates the meteorological conditions and sound conditions that will mimic the scenarios in which the learners will have to act in due time [?].

Question, how will the building meet the sustainability requirements?

Consuming [?] a building means of course that you will have an impact through the building on the planet. Through our eco conception we implemented an eco sustainable concept, meeting the present needs without jeopardising the future ability of the respect for the environment.

The building needs to be flexible and adaptable over time. We need it to be a building using products that were chosen for their robustness and their long-lasting life cycle and find materials which are bio-sourced and fit for interior design.

00:31:28

This here is the structure of the building, which you can see has a thickness which allows one to regulate the inside temperature compared to the outside temperature. It's like an apple that you have bitten into and you have the skin. That projects the building and on the other side you can see the inside of the building in a cross-section and to that we added a bit of nature with the green and biodiversity.

Mr Director-General, you have a question?

TAG I didn't mean to ask initially but you reminded me of something with the answers you gave. My question is, as you know, this institution will be a game-changer and a very important institution globally. When you were given the task to design this what did you feel? Because it's a huge responsibility.

TR Indeed, it was a huge responsibility but a huge honour as well. I'm not used to speaking in public and I apologise but anyway, we generally make buildings for people or for specific usages. That's our core business so it was important for us to look into this and to study the matter.

The real pleasure we derive from it is once the building is operational, that we see how people operate in it and work in it. Thank you. Thank you very much, Anne.

00:33:14

This is an Academy that's right in the midst of health concerns. Now let us look at a video that shows the Academy.

[Video plays/French language]

TR We have here Professor Anias Bouza [?] who is the Executive Director of the Academy. I have a very straightforward question for you. Why is it that WHO has decided to set up a training academy? Thank you, Madame de [Unclear].

There are three observations. There are 234 million healthcare professionals or people involved in social care but we still need another ten million in order to meet the SDGs. We need to have access to human resources and healthcare. This is a challenge for the whole world.

The second observation is it takes about ten years for healthcare recommendations to be implemented in most of the countries. Of course this means that not everybody has access to healthcare and of course access to quality healthcare and COVID has shown the importance of resilient healthcare services. This means resilient healthcare professionals.

00:36:41

We need to invest in our healthcare and this means first and foremost investing in human resources so an Academy seemed to be obvious. It has a vision which is to draw on all the resources available - new technology, digitalisation - so that we can upskill healthcare professionals all over the world to enable them to have access to new training and to provide them with certificates which we hope will be recognised everywhere in the world and which will further their healthcare careers.

70% of healthcare professionals are women and so this should also help to improve the skills of many women, which I think is what we mean by empowerment.

Who will be taking part in the training, doctors? Anybody who's working in health or social care, healthcare professionals but those who design healthcare policies and perhaps just ordinary citizens ultimately because they need to have skills as well.

We see how important it is for communities to take on board the healthcare challenges of the future. Empowerment is important.

Could you give us an example of the kind of programmes you're working on?

00:38:12

Let me mention a priority. There are many priorities in healthcare obviously but COVID has shown that access to vaccines is an absolute priority. We need to improve and increase production capacity all over the world and one of our priorities is a new programme that will be very agile and will be adapted to meet the need for quality assurance regulation.

We will be including training for the 900,000 people we need at the moment to carry out immunisation programmes in low and medium-income countries to help us emerge from this crisis. President, Sir, I know how important this is for you.

Thank you. Thank you for the hard work that has been done. You've given some examples and you've mentioned future prospects. In three to five years' time how do you see the Academy deployed, the first training programmes underway? We're talking about 16,000 on-site trainees but also millions of people remotely so how do you see this?

The building should be available as of the end of 2023 and we should be moving into it at the beginning of 2024. We want to have a wealth of programmes, we want to have a real portfolio which will be relevant for a whole range of healthcare professionals, healthcare workers.

00:39:47

But of course this has to meet people's needs out on the ground. We need to really take stock of what those needs are so that we can adapt to them and provide the kind of skill and competences that are needed to improve healthcare worldwide. The Academy must provide new competencies and have a real impact on the ground. That's the first objective.

The second objective is to be recognised by its peers as a high-quality training tool. It has to be the gold standard of further training in health throughout the world.

Thank you very much, professor Buza. We wish you and your whole team a lot of real success with this outstanding project.

We now have a clearer overview of the WHO Academy but now let's go a step further and open the doors. We're going to be showing you a programme that's already been deployed in the Academy. It's the one for mass casualty management and we're going to be listening to some testimonials for healthcare professionals who've benefited from the programme, one here in Lyon but another in Athens, one in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia and one in Somalia.

00:41:19

A member of the team, Dr Nelson Olim, who's head of Simulation Learning, will be introducing this sequence so over to you, Nelson.

[Video plays]

NO At the WHO Academy we seek to offer immersive and interactive experiences that have been designed for maximum impact and this is why I would like to invite you, Mr President, Dr Tedros, to talk to some of the participants of this course from all around the world. I would like to present on screen Dr Marina Kalogradaki from Greece - welcome - Dr Said Abdi from Somalia. Dr Ayalu Zawadi from Ethiopia, and here in the room with us, Msr Augustin [Unclear] from France. The floor is yours.

UM [French language].

UF As you wish.

00:45:17

EM Okay. Thank you for being with us. I think the first question regarding your different training programmes is about what you get from this programme in your day-to-day life. How long did it last and what did you get from this programme in order to improve your day-to-day?

UF Maybe Mr Abdi from Somalia. Would you like to answer first? Dr Muhammad Abdi from Somalia, can you hear us? Would you like to answer first?

DA Hello. Hello, Mr President. Hello, Director-General. I am a surgeon and the Director of a 65-bed hospital in Somalia. In Somalia we are having nearly mass-casualty incidents related to complex... and of course the situation is not yet improving.

In Somalia we also don't have [sound slip] so that we are forced to deal with [?] every crisis. In every hospital mass casualty management plans in place will help us to treat our patients [unclear] and also to allocate the right resources in place.

Mr President, Director-General, mass casualty management has [unclear] when such a situation occurs. The MCM must be in place where I can immediately respond to what happens in my area.

Of course this will let me save resources, lives and doctors' time. Before this MCM programme we were treating our patients very randomly in many cases.

00:48:10

Mr President, Director-General, if you'll let me give you a very simple example, there was a large explosion that took place not far from my

hospital and then many casualties were arriving at the hospital at the same time.

But thanks to the medical and non-medical staff knowing their roles under the new system that we were applying [sound slip] programme that had helped us to differentiate or to know what we do in a pressure [?] time. Thank you so much.

UF Maybe a question for you, Dr [Unclear]. Thank you for joining us. You're an anaesthesiologist and head of accident and emergency department in Athens. Since you took this course have you had the opportunity to apply the skills you acquired?

MA Thank you very much for the question, Mr President. It is a big honour to be here and participate in this ceremony. This programme is really very important and useful. As Director of the Emergency Department at the largest trauma centre in Greece I have learned after the programme to better manage my staff [?] in the case of a mass casualty incident and organise my unit, [inaudible].

00:50:07

The programme helped me to identify key roles that could be assigned and [inaudible] in time when we [inaudible]. Recently in Greece we [inaudible] with wildfires. This happened a few weeks after the training at the WHO Academy. My hospital was the main one to receive the victims from the fires so I had the opportunity to use the knowledge and the skills that I gained from the programme.

Fortunately we didn't have many victims but at least we had a plan. Of course we have different plans for our hospitals but they only share the management level. By defining a mass casualty management plan as proposed by the WHO Academy we can include everyone in the medicine unit and even more so everybody feels better prepared in case of emergencies.

Having similar plans and common terminology between hospitals will also help us better collaborate during an emergency and support each other. Finally the main target is to do our job better and to save more lives. Thank you.

00:51:48

TAG I think the next question will be to Dr Soren. I know you're Director of the hospital in Lyon so after this training what was the most striking thing you observed? Thank you.

TR Thank you, Director-General, President. Three factors really. First of all it's shared training, the international dimension of it and the importance of simulated exercises. I'm not actually a doctor, unfortunately

or otherwise. I'm a hospital manager so I'm a manager but I was involved in the training and I think that's important.

It's open to all. There were doctors and nurses from our hospital but also managers and as a young manager this really encourages me to carry on with pluridisciplinary exercises. I think we're going to be able to better cope with crises thanks to this.

The international scope - I was delighted that I could learn from expert trainers who had an international vision. The training that we've been given about how to handle mass casualties was not tailor-made for France and that makes it that much more interesting because there were a whole series of different scenarios, different from those we usually work with and this opens up our minds and helps us to consider new solutions and to advance.

00:53:28

We have an emergency hospital plan in France, that's specific to France but this adds to it and it means that we'll be able to adapt our A&E services much faster. So it was wonderful to have an exchange between countries, hospitals and professions.

Then I mentioned simulations. We had tabletop stimulation throughout and this is key, I think, in the WHO. It also is based on the expertise that we have here in Lyon where we do a lot of simulated learning.

It means that everybody, learners and students and healthcare professionals, can really benefit from the tools which are at our disposal so thank you very much.

TAG Okay. The next question will be to Dr Ayalu Zawadi. I know you have vast experience on the scene in crisis management so I just want you to tell us the differences you see in this training compared to your previous training.

AZ Good afternoon, good morning and good evening, everyone, Mr President and Director-General. I want to say [Amharic language] in Amharic. I'm just saying Happy New Year and Happy True Cross. Today is a holiday in Ethiopia in remembrance of the True Cross, which is registered in UNESCO.

00:55:12

In my area I'm working in the largest trauma hospital in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We had a lot of exposures and started the training. We've made significant changes to what we used to practise. As you've previously seen from our previous video the simulation was really very interactive so almost the actual scenario.

We had evaluated around 50 patients within one hour which was organised by the Ministry of Health of Ethiopia and the WHO team. I was Deputy Incident Commander during the simulation and the simulation mainly focused on the emergency unit.

We significantly improved the preparedness level and the [unclear] command structure and also a communication system. Just to give you an example, the triage system which we used to use in the emergency unit was based on the level of illness and the criticality; we changed it to the simple technique, walking and non-walking where only the non-walking people will go to the emergency department whereas the others will go to other areas to give them better care.

00:56:25

This significantly decreases emergency department crowding, which has a huge impact for us.

Finally we did a debriefing session, what went well, what went wrong and what are the things to improve with the participants and also stakeholders from WHO. My hospital team was really happy to take part in this large-scale training. We tried to test our plan and also for future preparedness.

So I hope cascading this training to the rest of the hospitals in the region will have a great impact. Thank you.

UF Thank you, Dr [Unclear], thank you, Dr Abdi, thank you, Dr Zawadi. Thank you, merci, Msr Souhel. T y, Nelson. Thank you all for that very interesting time.

TR This brings us to the final part of our ceremony. We're going to be listening to the speech of the Director-General of the WHO and then the speech of the President.

TAG It's a bit hot here, the light. Your Excellency, Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic of France, Your Excellency, [Unclear], Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Your Excellency and my friend, Olivier Veran, Minister of Solidarity and Health, Your Excellency, Frederic Vidal, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Your Excellency, Louise Mushikiwabo, Secretary-General of the International Organisation of the Francophonie, Your Excellency, the Right Honourable Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Mr Gregory Doucet, Mayor of Lyon, Mr Bruno Bernard, President of the Metropole, and Mr Laurent Vokier, President of the Regional Council, Honourable Members of the Parliament, distinguished guests, dear colleagues and friends.

[French language]

I will tell you a good one when I speak about the first interactions of this Academy with His Excellency, the President; a nice word I like.

I'm delighted to be in Lyon today for this ground-breaking ceremony of the WHO Academy and I would especially like to thank you, Mr President, for your commitment and support for the WHO Academy but also for WHO and global health more generally.

00:59:51

I have especially appreciated your leadership and support during the COVID-19 pandemic including the important role you played in the initial discussions of what became the ACT Accelerator.

But the close relationship between France and WHO goes back much further than the pandemic. Indeed the WHO Academy is the latest expression of France's long-standing support for WHO and its historic commitment to advancing global health.

This goes back to 1851 when the first International Sanitary Conference was held in Paris. Later the first international office of public hygiene, the forerunner of the WHO, was founded in Paris in 1907.

Under President Macron's leadership the Government of France has been a driver and principal investor in the WHO Academy and has done much to guide its development.

I would also like to thank the Auvergne Rhone-Alpes, the Lyon Metropole and the City of Lyon for your strong support, investment and hospitality and for bringing us to this moment - I think, the previous leadership, the Mayor, the Metropole, the region and also the current.

01:01:27

I also express my gratitude to Alain Merrier and Gerard Mestrale, who play a key role in mobilising the private sector and local partners. I'd also like to use this opportunity to thank Ambassador Michele Boccoz, who is now the Ambassador of France in Manila, my friend, Dr Jim Campbell, Tana, Gaia and also Ambassador Francois Resu who just finished his term, and also Ambassador Jerome, who took over quickly so the support from Geneva, the Embassy was also great.

I would like to recognise the generous support of the Buffet Foundation, which has helped to bring us to this moment. It's a moment that has been four years in the making. Shortly after I became Director-General in 2017 we set about transforming WHO into an organisation that was more responsive to the needs of countries and more effective in meeting those needs.

As we asked our member states and our own workforce what they needed from WHO the answer was consistent training, capacity-building. Countries told us they needed support to build their capacities for emergency preparedness and response, to response to the dual

challenge of communicable and non-communicable diseases and to strengthen every facet of their health systems from information to health financing.

01:03:15

Then once capacity-building was clear as a need from member states and from our own staff there was a G20 meeting. If I remember, this was in Argentina and I wanted to talk to His Excellency, the President. We met in the corridor and I told him about the idea and he said, Tedros, this idea is very serious and it's a big idea. He took it like that.

Then he said, I will give you my mobile and also when I return to Paris I will arrange - we need to discuss it in Paris. Then we met in early 2019 in his office and when he gave me his mobile he said, let's take this seriously and let's talk in Paris. I said in the language I like, oh la la, I think this thing is done.

Then not only that, after the meeting in Paris he mobilised the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the city, the metropole, the region, the private sector. Almost all partners who need to be involved within here were involved because he believed from the start that this needs the contribution of all sectors.

Not only that, we agreed in our meeting that this should be in Lyon so that's how it started and almost from early 2019 you can see and we both call this academy our daughter.

01:04:58

WHO has long been known, as you know, for its world-class technical guidance across a huge range of health issues and I will tell you why he got it and why this Academy is important.

But the guidance we give has not always delivered the impact it should in countries. Too often it sits on a shelf or in an overworked health administrator's inbox and isn't fully implemented, the norms, the guidance that we prepare.

We need to find ways of making sure WHO guidance is applied faster and delivers results faster. To do that we must make sure health workers can access learning opportunities that will help them apply the latest WHO guidance and make a real difference in the lives of the people they serve.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a powerful reminder of how critical health workers are and why they need investment, decent jobs, the most up-to-date information, competencies and tools to keep their communities healthy and safe.

01:06:14

Global health challenges are constantly evolving and so must the way we learn. Traditional classroom-based, in-person training is valuable, as you know, but is inadequate in its impact, scale and speed to meet global health challenges because the new concept...

Of course it will have in-person, classroom-based trainings, as Ania said, 16,000 per year estimated, but through this Academy we will train hundreds of millions. I was saying tens of millions. It could be hundreds of millions. We can expand it as much as we can.

Imagine the impact of training millions from here using AI and advanced technologies. I will give you an example. Four years ago, around that time WHO launched the OpenWHO.org, an online learning platform for making WHO's evidence-based learning available to a mass audience globally.

During the pandemic we have developed 38 courses offered in 56 languages with almost six million learner enrolments and 70% of enrolments are from low and middle-income countries. This OpenWHO.org platform provides powerful proof of concept for the WHO Academy, which we expect to have even greater reach and greater impact.

01:07:45

From its base here in Lyon the WHO Academy will be a school for the future and for the whole world. Our ambition is not modest. It's to transform lifelong learning for health impact globally.

Using state-of-the-art learning technologies and advancements in learning science, the Academy will expand worldwide access to the highest-quality learning. It will deliver multilingual, personalised learning programmes in digital, in-person and blended formats anywhere in the world and it will go beyond the transfer of knowledge to building the competencies of millions of people including health workers, managers, educators, ministries of health and the general public.

It will also be a centre of learning and career development for WHO's own workforce. But WHO and France will not do this alone. The Academy will work closely with partners in not only Lyon but around the world and although it will have its roots in France as part of WHO the Academy will belong to the whole world.

01:09:14

We seek the engagement of all nations in making it a success. We also look forward to establishing regional hubs using existing health institutions to extend and expand the Academy's reach. The Lyon campus, to be completed in 2023, will reflect WHO's values and ambitions. It will be an innovative, accessible, eco-friendly - as Ann said,

the designer - collaborative and interactive facility in the heart of Lyon's biomedical district.

This futuristic campus will blend smart architecture and the latest innovations in adult learning. Its high-tech simulation facility, unlike any in the world, will use virtual and augmented reality to prepare learners from around the world for disaster response and other health emergencies in realistic field conditions.

In future we hope the Academy will also have a research role, complementing the work of WHO's international agency for research on cancer which is also based in Lyon. 2021 has been designated the year of the health and care worker, recognising the invaluable contribution that health and care workers make to our lives and our world.

But that recognition must be more than lip service. We owe it to health and care workers to ensure they have the knowledge, the tools and the competencies to do their jobs to the best of their ability. After all, it is in our own interests.

01:11:21

That's what the WHO Academy is all about. It's an investment in equity, health, education and technology but ultimately it's an investment in people and a healthier, safer, fairer future. This concept came before even the pandemic, just a few months before the pandemic but now it's even more important given what we have witnessed during the pandemic.

So the pandemic made it even more important and we have to do it with a sense of urgency.

TR Thank you again, Mr President.

TAG I still remember the corridor in Argentina and when you gave me your mobile and you said, this thing is very serious. You were right and I also remember my own words, oh la la - because I was really happy to find a real partner. That's why I said oh la la.

Thank you once again also to the city, the metropole of Lyon, the regional council and to the Government and people of France for your hospitality and commitment. I hope you will take care of the WHO Academy, Lyon. It belongs to you and belongs to the whole world and I hope it will be a game-changer. Merci beaucoup. I thank you.

01:13:38

TR Director-General, dear Dr Tedros, Secretary-General of the OIF, dear Louise, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Ministers, Mayor, President of the Regional Council, President of the metropolitan area, Members of Parliament, French and European, Prefects, Excellencies,

Director of the WHO Academy, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, I have the sense that you're beginning to get a clearer idea of this Academy.

I'm the last to take the floor. As such I will also be thanking all those to whom we owe thanks but also to say how important this Academy is for all of us and also talk briefly about the pandemic we're going through at the moment and what we have learnt from it and what the Academy can contribute to some lessons on solidarity and a few words on our strategy regarding global solidarity.

With the WHO's Director-General you have explained very clearly the lead-up to the announcement of this Academy, of the decision and this ceremony. We had an initial discussion and I have to thank you and, through you, all of the WHO teams. I also have to thank all of the French diplomatic teams.

01:15:25

You were kind enough to mention our Ambassadors and I would like again to thank them. They have worked with the WHO in their mission for health and are part of the permanent representation in Geneva. As such they played a decisive role.

I'd also like to thank Professor Anias Bouzin, who has taken on the task of co-ordinating the work around this Academy and who has talked about the prospects for the Academy. Thanks to all of you involved in the diplomacy leading up to this.

I'd also like to thank the elected officials. None of this could have been possible without the support of the town, the metropolitan area and the region and the regional council, who have been involved from the start.

Georges Benkenikon has been quoted several times and that's only fitting. He was Mayor at the time. He's also a doctor by training and we know how committed he is to all of these issues. Thank you, Georges, for having believed in this project and together with your successor, the President of the metropolitan area and of the regional council, you formed a team that has worked hard on this.

01:16:45

President of the regional council, your council has been very firmly committed, the region has been firmly committed. Thank you very much indeed because this helped us to lead to fruition an idea initially.

I'd also like to thank the region as a whole that has done everything to make sure that we could work forward. I'd also like to thank the Ministers here and their teams who worked together with the local officials to bring this about.

When we say Lyon, Lyon stands for co-operation between public and private sectors. In France the public and private sectors were seen as completely separate, often in contradiction with each other, including in Lyon but this is not the case any more in Lyon and Lyon firms have believed in co-operation between the sectors.

I'd like to thank Alain Meriou, who has shown vision in developing new international partnerships. He was there when we needed to make progress on many issues. He was there and with many companies, with his sons he has fostered support, sponsors. We have many sponsors and benefactors.

01:18:17

the Merrier Institut, Bollinger, Sanofi, Total, [Unclear], April, which has just confirmed, will be working alongside the local and regional authorities. Other companies are considering joining in as well and I trust that they will stand by this academy so that we can go even further.

I'd like to thank all of those who have activated the national private ecosystem and will continue to do so. This Academy will play a key role as part of our strategy with the WHO - some figures have been quoted - and it will play a key role for us and for the strategy that we want to implement when it comes to health research and policies.

Several previous speakers have said what the Academy will be doing and that it will be training a whole ecosystem, not just health and care workers but also managers. This reflects the strategy that we are deploying at national level at the moment with the Health Congress and considerable investments, €8 billion a year, research planning for several years, working with universities which are going to be spending an extra €25 billion in research in health and a 2030 health strategy, €7.5 billion in cutting-edge technology and innovation in the health area.

01:20:12

So this Academy is fully part and parcel of that strategy. The region, the town, the metropolitan area, the whole country will benefit from the multiple synergies. First and foremost we will develop around the hub of Lyon centres of excellence. This has been mentioned and I can only endorse what has been said - infectious diseases and cutting-edge innovation on these topics.

Universities, research centres based here, the private-sector partners which are also going to be investing more in the region - a few months ago I was here to innovate some centres of excellence - and will make this hub even more than is the case now, a major cluster in research and innovation in infectious diseases and the follow-up and the on-shoring of our pharmaceutical industry, working in synergy with many other sectors

so that we have cutting-edge innovation production in vaccines for instance and our MA messenger technologies.

As part and parcel of the same national European strategy built around this Academy we hope to develop a new type of training. Of course we will be working hand-in-hand with the WHO but we also want for ourselves, for the private and public sectors, for induction training and also lifelong training to develop new types of training for health and care workers and anyone involved in the medical sector.

01:22:19

There are huge needs at the moment in terms of training and further training for all of these professions and this was part and parcel of our Seguo [?] strategy I mentioned earlier. We want to develop training hubs both for initial training but also for lifelong learning.

This Academy provides a unique opportunity to give an impetus for the development of such training not just for the region but France as a whole. It can be a centre of excellence where we will be able to have training programmes that will dovetail with national training programmes, with universities but also international training programmes such as the ones that the WHO provides.

01:23:10

France as a site will also be a location for health training in the French-speaking world, dear Louise. This illustrates clearly what we wish to do and thank you for your commitment in wanting to further promote French-speaking regions, the French-speaking world.

We want to work hand-in-hand with the African continent and have a hub for training which can be physical training, on-site training but also digital training, which can reach out to the whole of the African continent to train healthcare professionals and managers there and this is vital.

If we want to have true health solidarity at global level that will be essential so we can develop here as part of the strategy for the Francophonie but also for our health strategy. So it's a bold dream that we had and collectively you're making it possible. It is a very concrete achievement which is a major contribution within the WHO but it will also mean that France can do much, much more in its endeavours; it can get more benefits and spin-offs in terms of research and training at international level and reaching out to the African continent. We will be able to do more and better.

01:24:43

The second facet I wanted to address is our strategy relating to solidarity with other countries when it comes to health and particularly in the frame

of the pandemic. This Academy obviously is highly relevant to this endeavour.

Over the last 18 months we have all been battling furiously against this virus which is just the last in a long serious and is the bread and butter of the WHO, these viruses. All of those who are fighting for vaccination throughout the world are familiar with these epidemics.

Over the last 18 months our populations have been suffering from this pandemic, which is hitting many continents elsewhere much harder than ours. I won't go back to what Dr Tedros has been said about all that has been done but I would like to impart to you some of our convictions, which I think are essential so that we can learn from this crisis.

You cannot emerge from an international crisis, a pandemic without solidarity and this crisis really was the motor of innovation. Never before had humankind produced a vaccine in less than a year. It has generated employment, exchange and learning and it's been a tremendous challenge in forcing us to organise vaccination campaigns on an unprecedented scale and we are succeeding.

01:26:21

But it would be foolish to think that the battle has been won. This crisis has also taught us that you cannot emerge from an international pandemic if you do not have a global strategy and the WHO has been saying this for many months when talking about vaccination. Let's not lose sight of this.

France is one of the member countries that said that the ACT Accelerator was extremely important and we really pushed for this to develop a strategy, a diagnosis, a deployment of vaccination campaign with COVAX. I'd like to thank all those who have taken on responsibilities for that.

France announced that we would be increasing our vaccine donations. 120 million doses will be donated, more than we have used in France now and this in the short term between now and the end of this year.

What we've also learnt is that this strategy requires some simple ingredients to work. You can't just give vaccination doses. In the longer term you've got to do more than that and you need more transparency and the WHO has a clear role to play in this respect.

01:27:48

ACT-A has played a major role. I'd like to thank GAVI, the global fund, UNITAID. But we need to have more transparency otherwise we're dealing with huge numbers of vaccines and billions but actually you don't know where it goes. So it has to be clear, there has to be follow-up, you have to

monitor and we think that more needs to be done under the aegis of the WHO in this respect.

That's why at the coming G20 France will be advocating a code of conduct be tabled that will be supported by the WHO with clear objectives. We need to have a compass that is equity and we need to make sure that there is transparency regarding procurement, orders, delivery and pricing because my conviction at the moment is that there are lots of promises made and lots of money is promised but often it arrives very late, nobody knows what price has been paid to the pharmaceutical labs per dose.

I think that in the name of solidarity some companies are making profits and that is not part of the values we defend. International solidarity is not that. We need to enhance this transparency and have a clear code of conduct. All of the partners must sign up to that.

01:29:22

The second aspect that has to be included in the solidarity - and this is part of the G20 as well - is policy debate and I'll come back this in a minute. Transparency and then technology transfer. Pharmaceutical companies - and there are many of them in the room and they're already doing a lot. Many of them have been out in Africa, they have foundations that work there.

I'd like to appeal to them to do even more in terms of technology transfer. When there is a crisis there's a tendency to be selfish and focus on your own specific needs and if the vaccines are not made locally they arrive late no matter how willing everybody is.

Europe - this is a very European region - is the only place in the world - and this needs to be said time and time again - where 50% of the vaccines produced have been exported. That's been the case nowhere else in the world. Our American friends banned the export of vaccines and sometimes even blocked exports elsewhere.

They have been donating some vaccines only since the summer but not from the beginning of the crisis. Even when we had trouble with our vaccination campaign we were already exporting 50% of the doses produced.

01:30:52

That's not the case of China, the United States, of the countries of the Near and Middle East and I think that this should be said and we should be proud of it. There were no export restrictions, the exports were not blocked.

But we also need to develop local vaccine production in countries of intermediate income level and particularly in Africa. Currently the vaccination coverage in Africa is just 3%. It's taken a long time to get the vaccines out there.

India could not export for a while and then it had to cope with its own crisis. Africa represents 20% of the vaccine needs in the world and 1% of the production capacity. It doesn't have to be that way. We need to make major commitments and not just to have fill-and-finish plants in Africa but we need to have real production capacity out there.

01:32:03

We need to do this hand-in-hand for the WHO and it will be good for us as well because it's a win-win co-operation and it's also fairer. So technology transfer is indispensable.

The third aspect relating to this policy of solidarity and that we've learnt from the COVID pandemic - this links up to the Academy - is that we need to train and we need to support primary healthcare systems.

The President of the regional council reminded us of Charles Mario's experience. It's all too true; you can't just send out vaccines to a country that's not prepared and doesn't have the infrastructure and the structures. There are countries in Africa that have doses but they can't roll out the vaccination campaigns.

There are marvellous tools, UNICEF which does outstanding work in this field and the Global Fund which has worked with UNICEF and we know that we can roll out vaccination campaigns with international organisations.

In autumn of 2019 France committed to work more closely with the Global Fund but we need to train health workers in all countries in the world. We need to consolidate primary healthcare in all countries of the world.

01:33:34

Don't think that healthcare problems will disappear when the pandemic is over. That's wrong. On the contrary, so training and healthcare system consolidation are vital. The Academy will play a major role but our development aid policies must do more as well. That's essential. Let's not lose sight of that.

Signing up to some billion euros and vaccines does not clear us of all further responsibilities. We need to do more and we can do that thanks to and through the Academy.

Then a few words about our global health strategy. A lot has been said by previous speakers but above and beyond this fight against the pandemic

and the messages I just imparted this Academy is really at the crossroads of health, training and caring for human needs.

It's the fruit of intuition that has been borne out by the pandemic but it's also part and parcel of a broader global strategy and France will be an active partner in this strategy. It's no longer possible to think up and organise health policies in isolation.

01:34:56

The one health strategy that we launched in the margin of the Paris Peace Forum really says that we need a cohesive, coherent approach, human and animal health together with the fight for biodiversity and against climate change.

It's the conviction that ecosystems are part and parcel of the same system, it's all interdependent. Our activities, which we'll continue to develop through innovations and development policies, also have to fully take on board the consequences, which we used to think were outside the model.

The one health strategy is a revolution in a way in the way we think about health, we develop our production systems and co-operate together.

Combating zoonosis and epidemics and protecting ecosystems are part and parcel of the same strategy and this is why we have launched European and French research policies with this in mind and we're very much in favour of this one health approach which resynchronises all of our agendas.

There is no strategy other than one that takes on board these far-reaching revolutions of our production modes but also is an amazing source of innovation and research and generates value added and employment.

01:36:35

Our global strategy will also rest on more innovation. Everything I've just said has an outcome in the public and private sector in developed, medium-income and poor countries, requires more investment in research strategy, in teaching, in innovation, in every aspect of health.

The equations that we have inherited from the past are no longer realistic. Why? Because there's been an acceleration of evolutions and their consequences. We are going to be seeing a whole series of global crises and Europe needs to get back into the international competition game.

Look at the amounts that we have to invest in innovation research and compare what we invest with the Americans and the Chinese. So we're going to have to invest millions of euros in research and innovation in health already but at European level through the European Research

Agency and the strategy with the Commission we're going to have to be investing much more in cutting-edge technology, in major advances.

01:37:58

We're going to have to do this. All of this implies that we have international co-operation in health financing that is rethought completely. The Italian presidency has the DiMonte report, the presidency of the G20 and it's fully aware of this. We're going to have to be better co-ordinating the decisions of the G20 and be able to adapt to the change of scale and have much more co-ordination.

I think this is a good move. We need to think about public financing, convince the financial markets that private and public partners need to scale up, change co-ordination and co-operation strategies with the major powers so that the poorer countries can benefit from this transformation and middle-income countries as well.

But as Europeans we need to develop strategies of sovereignty and independence so that we can achieve this. If we do not invest sufficiently in research, development and innovation, in artificial intelligence, in custom-made medicine, in preventive and predictive medicine - and all of the people here are fully aware of the synergies between all these - and all the other innovations that have been deployed over the last few years, if we do not invest massively, both the public and the private sectors, innovation will be done elsewhere with all of the consequences that that implies in times of crisis.

01:39:40

The technological choices and the healthcare choices and the underlying models in terms of data protection for instance, individual risk protection, risk management.

We have always tried to protect privacy but the decisions will be taken elsewhere. If the innovation is done by the Chinese or the Americans the choices will be made thousands of kilometres away by a private sector or by a government that does not share our values in terms of data protection or solidarity.

So Europe has a moral obligation to be at the very heart of this international strategy. Those were the few words that I wanted to share with you. This strategy obviously will require a major input from the WHO and, Director-General, let me say that France will always be by your side.

I'm not saying this just in a personal capacity but institutionally as well. We have obligations and duties. We need to strengthen early warning systems. This is one of the tasks of the WHO. We need to go faster in times of crisis and this means that each member country is responsible

for sounding the alert and we cannot make any compromises or concessions.

01:41:20

No member country should be able to hide information or delay the transmission of that information. This is a moral duty of each and every member country of the WHO. We need to protect the WHO from any form of interference. We're talking about science with WHO, not politics.

We need to make sure that we defend with all of our strength within the WHO the protection of free and open science. These are values that France believes in. These are the values that underpin health and scientific multilateralism and nobody should be allowed to corrupt those values.

France will play its role because it's France's history and it's France's vocation. Dear friends, those are the few words I wanted to share with you today and I must say how very proud I am to be here with you for this ceremony to launch the Academy.

We will be proud to continue with this project, which stands at the very heart of everything we believe in. Thank you. Vive la Republique, Vive la France.

01:42:44