NAME: EGBUNG OKIMONYE KAREN

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DEPARTMENT: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY

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QUESTION:

Identify the role of specific international organization in responding toCOVID-19 pandemic globally.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. This virus which was first discovered in Wuhan, China in December 2019 declared to be a [Public Health Emergency of International Concern](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_Health_Emergency_of_International_Concern) on 30 January 2020, and recognized as a pandemic by the [World Health Organization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Health_Organization) on 11 March 2020.Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment.  Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is be well informed about the COVID-19 virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands or using an alcohol based rub frequently, maintain social distancing and not touching your face. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it’s important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow).At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments. The WHO will continue to provide updated information as soon as clinical findings become available.

Now this paper is going to focus on two international organizations as case studies namely the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Union

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

The [World Health Organization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Health_Organization) is a leading organization involved in the global coordination for mitigating the [2019-20 coronavirus pandemic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019-20_coronavirus_pandemic). In January 2020, WHO notified the world about "pneumonia of unknown cause" from China and subsequently followed up with investigating the disease. In March 2020, the WHO declared the [coronavirus disease 2019](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus_disease_2019) as a pandemic. The WHO has helped in its own way to reduce the spread of the deadly coronavirus. To help countries navigate through these challenges, the World Health Organization (WHO) has updated [operational planning guidelines](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/maintaining-essential-health-services-and-systems) in balancing the demands of responding directly to COVID-19 while maintaining essential health service delivery, and mitigating the risk of system collapse. This includes a set of targeted immediate actions that countries should consider at national, regional, and local level to reorganize and maintain access to high-quality essential health services for all. Countries should identify essential services that will be prioritized in their efforts to maintain continuity of service delivery and make strategic shifts to ensure that increasingly limited resources provide maximum benefit for the population. They also need to comply with the highest standard in precautions, especially in hygiene practices, and the provision of adequate supplies including personal protective equipment This requires robust planning and coordinated actions between governments and health facilities and their managers. Some examples of essential services include: routine vaccination; reproductive health services including care during pregnancy and childbirth; care of young infants and older adults; management of mental health conditions as well as non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases like HIV, malaria and TB; critical inpatient therapies; management of emergency health conditions; auxiliary services like basic diagnostic imaging, laboratory services, and blood bank services, among others. Well-organized and prepared health systems can continue to provide equitable access to essential service delivery throughout an emergency, limiting direct mortality and avoiding increased indirect mortality. The guidelines stress the importance of keeping up-to-date information. This requires frequent transparent communications with the public, and strong community engagements so the public   can maintain trust in the system to safely meet their essential needs and to control infection risk in health facilities. This will help ensure that people continue to seek care when appropriate, and adhere to public health advice.

The WHO has spearheaded several initiatives like [COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_Solidarity_Response_Fund) for fundraising for the pandemic and [Solidarity Trial](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solidarity_Trial) for investigating potential treatment options for the disease. The Solidarity Response Fund will raise money from a wide range of donors to support the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners to help countries respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The World Health Organization has helped a lot during this pandemic, first by making the pandemic known globally to providing information on the pandemic, to providing guides to help prevent the spread of the new coronavirus and finally the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund for fundraising.

THE EUROPEAN UNION

The European Commission and the High Representative set out plans for a robust and targeted EU response to support partner countries' efforts in tackling the coronavirus pandemic. The EU's collective action has focused on addressing the immediate health crisis and resulting humanitarian needs, strengthening partner countries' health, water and sanitation systems and their research and prepared capacities to deal with the pandemic, as well as mitigating the socioeconomic impact. To underpin these actions, the EU has secured financial support to partner countries amounting to more than €15.6 billion from existing external action resources. Together with their partners, they are making sure that the substantial EU funding already allocated to them is targeted to help them deal with the impact of coronavirus.

The urge for the European Union to help its member countries and vulnerable countries began after the speech by The President of the European Commission, Ursula **von der Leyen:** “The virus knows no borders. This global challenge needs strong international cooperation. The European Union is working tirelessly to fight the pandemic. We all know that only together we can stop the worldwide spread of the coronavirus. To that end, the EU will soon convene a virtual pledging event to help mobilize the necessary funding and support the World Health Organisation to assist the most vulnerable countries.”

The EU's response follows a ‘[Team Europe](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2019-2024/urpilainen/announcements/commissioner-urpilainen-team-europe-our-partners-against-covid-19_en)' approach, aimed at saving lives by providing quick and targeted support to our partners to face this pandemic. It combines resources from the EU, its Member States and financial institutions, in particular the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to support partner countries and address their short-term needs, as well as the longer-term structural impacts on societies and the economy. The first Team Europe packages are already being implemented in the immediate neighbourhood: the Western Balkans, in the East and to the South.

The EU, as global actor and major contributor to the international aid system, will promote a coordinated multilateral response, in partnership with the United Nations, International Financial Institutions, as well as the G7 and the G20.

The European Union will continue to adapt its response to the evolving situation and focus on the most affected countries in need of health support, such as countries in Africa, the Neighbourhood, the Western Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa, parts of Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean. The EU's response will focus on the most vulnerable people, including migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and their host communities and integrate its strategic objectives set out in the Green Deal and the Digital Agenda. From the overall package of €15.6 billion, €3.25 billion are channeled to Africa, including €1.19 billion for the Northern African neighbourhood countries. The EU is securing in total €3.07 billion for the whole neighbourhood – €2.1 billion [for the South](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/coronavirus_support_south.pdf) and €962 million for the [Eastern Partner countries](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/coronavirus_support_eap.pdf) – and €800 million for the [Western Balkans](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/coronavirus_support_wb.pdf) and Turkey.

In addition, the overall package includes another €1.42 billion in guarantees for Africa and the neighbourhood from the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD). The EU will support Asia and the Pacific with €1.22 billion, another €291 million will go for the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific region, €918 million to support our partners in Latin America and the Caribbean and €111 million to support Overseas Countries and Territories

In addition, **while the EU aims to work cooperatively and constructively with its neighbours, we will always disclose harmful disinformation and its sources.**

Disinformation hurts your ability to make good decisions. Often it does so by trying to overwhelm you with conflicting information, making you unsure what you believe. The consequences can be serious – threats to people’s safety, damaging trust in governments and media, undermining our global influence and more. We are particularly vulnerable to disinformation in moments of stress and high emotion – and some people are using COVID-19 to strike when we are at our most vulnerable.