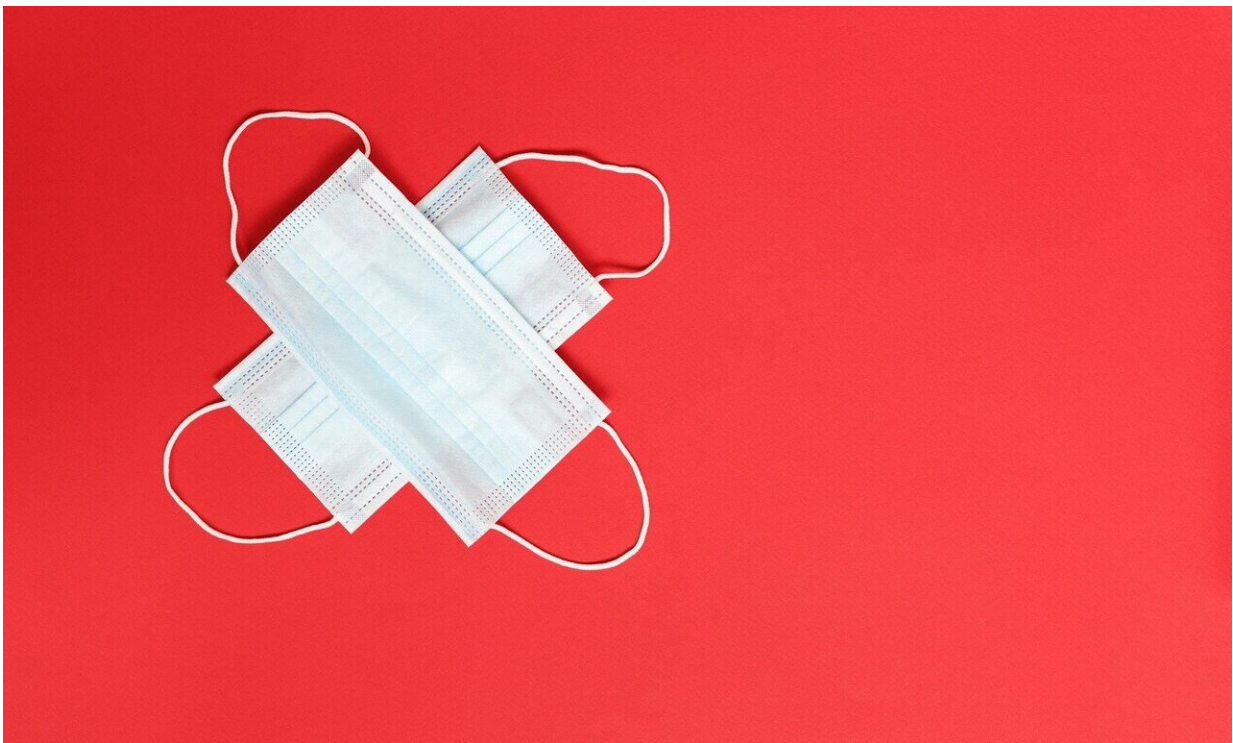


# Global policymakers call for effective infodemic management to be a substantive article in the Pandemic Accord

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The United Nations General Assembly held a high-level meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response on September 20, 2023, to continue discussions on finalizing a globally enforceable

Pandemic Accord or Treaty that will be presented to the World Health Organization's (WHO) World Health Assembly in May 2024.

This treaty, if agreed to and eventually ratified, will be the second international treaty instrument under WHO auspices, and represents a critical juncture in global health needed to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A serious challenge to addressing global health emergencies and pandemics is simultaneously addressing "infodemics" that occur during pandemics (defined by WHO as an excess of information, including false or misleading information on digital and physical platforms during a disease outbreak).

In a guest editorial, titled "[Effective Infodemic Management: A Substantive Article of the Pandemic Accord](#)," published in *JMIR Infodemiology*, authors who are members of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) Bureau call for effective infodemic management to be one of the substantive articles of the Pandemic Accord.

The editorial discusses the significant role of social media in disseminating both valuable information and harmful misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic. While platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have been crucial for sharing public health guidance, they have also amplified false narratives, including antivaccine sentiments.

Health-related misinformation on social media ranges from 0.2% to 28.8%, with political factors often being prominent. WHO suggests addressing this issue by closely monitoring, detecting, responding to, and promoting interventions for managing infodemics. Digital health

literacy, collaboration across sectors, and fact-checking are essential for combating misinformation. Additionally, an international instrument called "WHO CA+" is being developed to address pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response.

"Disseminating false information regarding health matters and medical interventions constitutes both a possible criminal offense and a violation of the fundamental human right to the highest achievable standards of health. The spread of misinformation during the COVID-19 [pandemic](#) tragically resulted in the loss of millions of lives."

"This underscores the imperative of our ongoing discussions to establish measures that enhance health literacy and transparency as integral components of the ongoing negotiations for a Pandemic Accord," says Tovar da Silva Nunes, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva.

The inclusion of effective infodemic management as a substantive article in the forthcoming Pandemic Accord reflects the growing awareness of the damaging impact of [misinformation](#) on public health. It underscores the need for international cooperation and measures to combat the spread of [false information](#) during global health crises, emphasizing the importance of health literacy and transparency in safeguarding lives worldwide.

**More information:** Kazuho Taguchi et al, Effective Infodemic Management: A Substantive Article of the Pandemic Accord, *JMIR Infodemiology* (2023). [DOI: 10.2196/51760](https://doi.org/10.2196/51760)

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