

A L B E R T O T E S T A

EL ESPÍRITU POBRE DEL RICO CAPITALISMO

Nota: 236

Economists' declarations



PAMPIA

UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE COALITION



(<http://healthforall.org/downloads/uhc-publication>)

ECONOMISTS' DECLARATION



CONVENED BY

(<https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/commitment/health/>)

More than **360 economists** in **53 countries** have now signed the Economists' Declaration on Universal Health Coverage. This historic document, led by Lawrence H. Summers of Harvard University, calls on global policymakers to prioritize a pro-poor pathway to universal health coverage as an essential pillar of sustainable development. Because investing in health makes economic sense.

The Economists' Declaration was originally launched in **September 2015** with **267 signatories** in **44 countries**. It was published in *The Lancet* and publicized in *The New York Times*.

DECLARATION TEXT

SIGNATORY LIST

NEWS RELEASE (<http://healthforall.org/news/economists-endorse-uhc>)

ECONOMISTS' DECLARATION ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

Published 18 September 2015 in The Lancet
Lead Signatory: Lawrence H. Summers, Harvard University
Convened by The Rockefeller Foundation

LANCET ARTICLE ([http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(15\)00442-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00442-1)) **NEW YORK TIMES** (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/18/health/economists-declare-uhc.html>)

With the United Nations launching the bold sustainable development agenda, this is a crucial moment for global leaders to reflect on the financial investments needed to maximize progress by 2030. As an input into deliberations around those investments, the signatories to this declaration, 267 economists from 44 countries, call on global policymakers to prioritize a pro-poor pathway to universal health coverage as an essential pillar of development.

Universal health coverage means ensuring that everyone can obtain essential health services at high quality without suffering financial hardship. Resource constraints require individual countries to determine their own definition of “essential” – while recognizing, in the words of former World Health Organization Director-General Gro Harlem Brundtland, that “... if services are to be provided for all, not all services can be provided. The most cost-effective services should be provided first.”

Even granted this recognition of resource constraints, our generation has a historic opportunity to achieve a “grand convergence” in global health, reducing preventable maternal, child, and infectious disease deaths to universally low levels by 2035. In its report, *Global Health 2035*, the Lancet Commission on Investing in Health showed that with today’s powerful tools for improving health, and the prospect for continued improvement in those tools, financially feasible universal health coverage in every country could lead to grand convergence with its accompanying benefits in both health and in protection from health-related financial risks. (1)

We amplify these points below.

Our global society has a vested interest in investing in health to transform lives and livelihoods.

- Health is essential to eradicating extreme poverty and promoting growth of well-being. (2,3) Over the past decade, health improvements – measured by the value of life-years gained – constituted 24% of full income growth in low- and middle-income countries. (1)
- Health systems oriented toward universal health coverage, immensely valuable in their own right, produce an array of benefits: in times of crisis, they mitigate the impact of shocks on communities; in times of calm, they foster more cohesive societies and productive economies.
- The economic benefits of investment in grand convergence are estimated to be more than 10 times greater than costs – meaning that early stages on the pathway to universal health coverage, focused on high-payoff convergence interventions, will have high value relative to the cost of raising revenue, including the deadweight (or welfare) cost of taxation, or (in most cases) to the value of its use in other sectors. (4)

The success of the next development chapter hinges on the ability to actually deliver proven health solutions to the poorest and most marginalized populations.

- There is a strong record of public sector and development assistance success in the finance and delivery of transformative health interventions – immunizations, treatment of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and childhood infections, and eradication or near eradication of major communicable diseases. At the same time most countries have experienced difficulties with delivering primary and secondary care in both the public and private sectors. Continued progress toward universal health coverage will require addressing these delivery problems.
- 150 million people fall into poverty every year paying for health out-of-pocket. (5) By pooling funding and providing early access to health services, universal health coverage reduces reliance on out-of-pocket payments, thereby protecting households from impoverishing financial risks.
- The Ebola virus disease epidemic has reminded us that we are only as strong as our weakest links. The debilitating effect of Ebola could have been mitigated by building up public health systems in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone at one third the cost of the Ebola response so far. (6)

Every country has the opportunity to achieve universal health coverage.

- More than 100 countries across the development spectrum have begun working toward universal health coverage – testing and increasingly demonstrating its feasibility.
- Countries will find greatest value for money by financing for everyone convergence-related services that are high-quality and free or low cost at the point of delivery. As their domestic resources increase, countries would expand the package of essential services that are publicly financed for all.
- Most countries have the capacity to raise more domestic funds for health through improved tax systems and innovative financing mechanisms. And given anticipated economic growth across low- and lower-middle-income counties, most countries will have additional financial means to invest more in health services and delivery. When allocated efficiently, greater investments in health can result in lower overall costs to the system. (1)

Development assistance for health will play an essential part in achievement of a grand convergence in global health and universal health coverage.

- Domestic funding alone will not be enough for many low-income countries to provide even the convergence-related health services. Focusing the available country-specific health aid on the convergence interventions in low-income (but committed) countries can provide invaluable help.
- A grand convergence in global health will be greatly helped by substantial investments from donors in the neglected global functions of development assistance for health: providing global public goods such as health research and development, dealing with cross-border externalities such as pandemics and antimicrobial resistance, and supporting leadership and stewardship of global institutions. Adequate finance of these global functions is likely to prove the most efficient path to improving conditions of the poor in middle-income countries. (7)

We, the undersigned, therefore urge that:

- Heads of government increase domestic funds for global health convergence and provide vocal political leadership to implement policy reforms toward pro-poor universal health coverage;
- Donor countries meet their pledges for international development assistance and commit to investing in the global functions of development assistance for health, particularly research and development for diseases of poverty;
- Development financing discussions explicitly address equity, including who pays domestically and who benefits;
- National policymakers embrace universal health coverage, as defined above, as an integrated approach for measuring progress toward health targets in the post-2015 global development framework.

...

Even with substantial rates of economic growth, resources for health (and other sectors) will remain highly constrained. The intrinsic value of improved health – and the demonstrated potential of governments and aid agencies to deliver key health interventions – points to maintaining and expanding commitment to health through investing in pro-poor pathways to universal health coverage. Amartya Sen has labeled this opportunity “the affordable dream.” (8)

**ECONOMISTS’ DECLARATION
SIGNATORIES**

Australia
Nejat Anbarci
Hristos Doucouliagos
Stephen Duckett
Simon Eckermann
Mark McGillivray
Barbara McPake
Jorida Zeneli

Argentina
Juan Ignacio Altuna
Silvia Juncos
Alejandro Sonis
Alberto Testa

Bangladesh
Syed Abdul Hamid
Mohammad A. Jabbar
Atonu Rabbani

Nigeria
Kehinde Akeem Adegoke
Ayodeji Ajiboye
Shehu Rano Aliyu
Elaine Baruwa
Nkata Chuku
Sampson Ezikeanyi
Musa Ibrahim Jega
Kenneth Ojo
Olumide Okunola
Olubajo Olalekan
Adesoji Ologun
Obinna Onwujekwe
Chibuzo Opara
Afees Adebare Salisu
Francis Nwachukwu Ukwuije

Norway
Halvor Mehlum
Kjetil Storesletten

Belgium
Claude d’Aspremont Lynden
Michel Huybrechts
Andre Sapir
Reinhilde Veugelers

Belize
Ignez Tristao

Bolivia
Luis Tejerina

Botswana
Linah K. Mohohlo

Brazil
Denizar Vianna Araujo
Tania Maria Beume
Marcia Cristina Gomes da Rocha
Vera Martins Da Silva
Marcella Distrutti
Luiz Alberto Esteves
Alexandre Chiavegatto Filho
Naercio Menezes Filho
Bruno Cara Giovannetti
Andre Medici
Marcelo J. Moreira
Rodrigo Soares
Mario Ramos Ribeiro

Cameroon
Zakariaou Njoumemi

Canada
Matilde Bombardini
Timothy Evans
Alan Freeman
Prabhat Jha
Steve Morgan
M. Kent Ranson
Alan Whiteside

Chile
Camilo Cid
Manuel Llorca-Jaña
Miguel Quiroga-Suazo
Christian Hernandez Valenzuela

China
Jikun Huang
Justin Yifu Lin
Ding Liu
Gordon G. Liu

Colombia
Pedro Buitrago
Giancarlo Romano G
Carlos Ernesto Escobar Vargas

Costa Rica
James Cercone
Luis Elizondo Vidaurre

Côte d’Ivoire
Ibrahim Magazi

Cyprus
Christopher Pissarides

Denmark
Bjørn Lomborg

Ecuador
Ruth Lucio

Egypt
Ahmed Kouchouk

Ethiopia
Degnet Abebaw
Assefa Abebe
Tadele Feree Agaje
Joseph Atta-Mensah
Alemayehu Geda
Netsanet Walelign Workie

France
Jerome Creel
Alan Kirman
Brouillet Pascal
Jean-Jacques Paul
Thomas Piketty
Eric de Roodenbeke

Germany
John Komlos
Dalia Marin

Ghana
Philip Kofi Adom
Frank Adu
Moses Aikins
Genevieve Cecilia Aryeetey
Francis Mensah Asenso-Boadi
Chris Atim
Richmond Commodore
Selassi Amah d’Almeida

Howard White

Pakistan
Suleman Abdiah
Hasan M. Mohsin

Peru
Sandro Parodi

Portugal
Rita Bastião

Singapore
Antonio Fatas
Kai Hong Phua

South Africa
Haroon Bhorat
Stan du Plessis
J. Paul Dunne
Jaya Josie
Mmatlou Kalaba
Patrizio Piraino
Nicola Vieg
Nick Vink
Martin Wittenberg
Ingrid Woolard

South Korea
Cheolsu Kim

Spain
Maria Blanco
Irma Clots-Figueras
Guillem Lopez-Casasnovas
Andreu Mas-Colell
Rafael Luque Muñoz
Ángel López Nicolás
Bienvenido Ortega
Julio Segura
Jose Tuñón

Sweden
Justice Mensah
Thomas Sterner

Switzerland
David B. Evans
Michael Gerfin
Alberto Holly
Jürgen Maurer
Xenia Scheil-Adlung
Simon Wieser

Thailand
Viroj NaRanong
Ammar Siamwalla
Siripen Supakankunti
Chalongphob Sussangkarn
Nualnoi Treerat

The Netherlands
Rob Baltussen
Hengky Kurniawan
J.L. (Hans) Severens
Eddy van Doorslaer

The Philippines
Karl Kendrick Chua

Turkey
Bilin Neyapti
Ilhan Can Ozen
Ilhan Ozturk
Ali C. Tasiran
Erol Taymaz
Ebru Voyvoda
A. Erinc Yeldan

Uganda
Mugisha David
Willy Rwamparagi Kagarura
Norbert Mubiru
Jean-Pascal N. Nganou

United Kingdom
Tony Atkinson
Nicholas Barr
Andrew Briggs
Karl Claxton
Paul Collier
Joan Costa-Font
Anthony J. Culyer
Tim Ensor
Eric French
Stephany Griffith-Jones
Andrew Hughes Hallett
Kara Hanson
Jenni Hislop
Mireia Jofre-Bonet
Andrew M. Jones
Richard Layard
Paul Levine
Anil Markandya
Marisa Miraldo
Alistair McGuire
Giovanni Melina

Augustin Kwasi Fosu
Edward Nketiah-Amponsah
Justice Nonvignon
Peter Quarthey
Daniel Sakyi
Nii Kwaku Sowa
Henry Telli
Ebo Turkson
George Tweneboah
Timothy O. Williams

India
Vinod B. Annigeri
Kishor Hari Badatya
Sugata Bag
Aditya Bhattacharjea
Pratap Singh Birthal
Satya R. Chakravarty
Sarbjit Chaudhuri
Mausumi Das
Nimai Das
Indraneel Dasgupta
S. Mahendra Dev
Chetan Ghate
Ashima Goyal
K. S. James
Somdeb Lahiri
Ramanan Laxminarayan
Srijit Mishra
Diganta Mukherjee
Subrata Mukherjee
Anjan Mukherji
Arnab Mukherji
Soumyanetra Munshi
Amarendu Nandy
Pulin B. Nayak
Rupayan Pal
Durgesh C. Pathak
M. Govinda Rao
Ayanendu Sanyal
Subrata Sarkar
Anindya Sen
Soumyen Sikdar
Charan Singh
Anup Sinha
Pankaj Sinha
Uday Bhanu Sinha
E. Somanathan
Krishnamurthy Subramanian (Subbu)
Aviral Tiwari
Beena Varghese

Indonesia
Teguh Dartanto
Djoni Hartono
Athia Yumna
Arief Anshory Yusuf

Israel
Sergiu Hart

Italy
Ferdinando Regalia

Japan
Masahiro Kawai
Alistair Munro
Takashi Oshio
Kenichi Ueda
Akihito Watabe

Kenya
Japheth Awiti
Joy Mueni Kiiru
Diana Kimani
George Kosimbei
Dianah Mukwate
Joseph Muchai Muniu
Mwenda Mwilaria
Jennifer Njaramba
Martine Odhiambo Oleche
Perez Onono
Apurva Sanghi

Malaysia
Syed Mohamed Aljunid

Mexico
Esteban Colla
Javier Dorantes Aguilar
Pablo Ibarraran
Matthew Kovach
Alejandro Figueroa Lara
David Mayer-Foulkes
Isidro Soloaga
Carlos M. Urzúa

Morocco
Rachid M. Aourraz
Driss M. Zine-Eddine El-Idrissi

Myanmar
Alex Ergo

Nicaragua
Carlos Herrera U

Anne Mills
Patrick V. Moore
Lucia Fiestas Navarrete
Joseph Pearlman
Zahidul Quayyum
Lucrezia Reichlin
Paul Revill
Bibhas Saha
Mark Sculpher
Peter C. Smith
Richard D. Smith
Nicholas Stern
Frances Stewart
Marc Suhrcke
Adair Turner
Anna Vassal
Sophie Witter
Olivia Wu
Robert Yates
Winnie Yip

United States
M. Caridad Araujo
Suchit Arora
Kenneth Arrow
Dean Baker
Kaushik Basu
Peter Berman
Stefano M. Bertozzi
David Blanchflower
Jacob Bor
Rebekah Heinzen Borse
Jeremy Bulow
Robert J. Camfield
Jim Campen
Karen Cavanaugh
Cheryl Cashin
Frank J. Chaloupka
Menzie D. Chinn
Daniel Cotlear
Janet Currie
David Cutler
Patricia Danzon
Brad DeLong
Asif Ud Dowla
Pascaline Dupas
Anthony Elson
James Fearon
Brandon Fenley
Carolyn Fischer
Victor R. Fuchs
Fabio Ghironi
Amanda Glassman
Alexander Gleason
Rachel Glennerster
Nora Gordon
Karen A. Grépin
Michael Grossman
Jonathan Gruber
Robert Haveman
Peter Heller
Rebecca Henderson
Christopher Hollenbeak
William Hsiao
Wenke Hwang
John Irons
Paul Isenman
Dean Jamison
Seema Jayachandran
Arjun Jayadev
Geoffrey Joyce
Ted Joyce
Dean Karlan
Robert Klitgaard
Eric Kramer
Sanjeev Kumar
Mattias Lundberg
Caroline Ly
Sara Machado
Carlos Martins-Filho
Keith E. Maskus
Deborah McFarland
Bruce Mizrach
Akbar Noman
Rachel Nugent
Nikolas Papavlassopoulos
Germain Pichop
Anne Morrison Piehl
Steve Radelet
Lakshmi K. Raut
Alvin Roth
Bernard Salanie
Will Semmler
Jason Shogren
Lara Shore-Sheppard
Vernon L. Smith
Agnes Soucat
Joseph E. Stiglitz
Lawrence H. Summers
Anita A. Summers
Daria Taglioni
Frank Thompson
Linda Thunstrom
Nathan W. Tefft
David J. Vanness
Nicholas Wilson

Barbara L. Wolfe
Tetsuji Yamada
Harry Zhang

Venezuela
Luis Zambrano Sequin

ADD YOUR SIGNATURE

If you are a professional economist and would like to add your signature to the Declaration:

Name

Affiliation (organization and title)

Country

Email

☒ **Please add my signature to the Economists' Declaration on Universal Health Coverage (you will be contacted to confirm).**

SIGN

(For general inquiries please email
(mailto:ebigelow@globalhealthstrategies.com).)

References

1. Jamison, DT, Summers, LH, Alleyne, G et al. Global health 2035: a world converging within a generation. The Lancet. 2013; 382: 1898–1955
2. WHO Commission on Macroeconomics and Health. Macroeconomics and health: investing in health for economic development. World Health Organization, Geneva; 2001
3. WHO Commission on Macroeconomics and Health and Working Group
1. Health, economic growth and poverty reduction. World Health Organization, Geneva; 2002
4. Kydland, FE, Mundell, R, Schelling, T, Smith, V and Stokey, N. Expert panel ranking. in: B Lomberg (Ed.) Global problems, smart solutions: costs and benefits. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; 2013: 701–716
5. Xu, K, Evans, DB, Carrin, G, Aguilar-Rivera, AM, Musgrove, P and Evans, T. Protecting households from catastrophic health spending. Health Affairs. 2007; 26: 972–983
6. Save the Children. A wake-up call: lessons from Ebola for the world's health systems. Save the Children, London; 2015
7. Schäferhoff, M, Fewer, S, Kraus, J et al. How much donor financing for health is channelled to global versus country-specific aid functions? The Lancet. 2015 (published online 13 July)
8. Sen, A. Universal healthcare: the affordable dream. The Guardian (London); 6 January 2015