Dear Dr Brundtland, Dear Mr Sy,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 6 March 2020. I truly appreciate the commitment of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board to address the health-related and economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. I can only agree with you that political leadership at the highest global level is crucial to tackle the situation appropriately. The European Commission is working tirelessly and on all fronts to help EU Member States coordinate their responses to COVID-19, protecting citizens’ health and countries’ economies, but we are also aware of our global responsibility.

The European Union is a strong driver for economies all over the world. The Commission has launched an emergency package of unprecedented scale to help Member States absorb the economic shock caused by COVID-19, and in this way, we also help partner economies get back on their feet.

Of course, economic support alone is not sufficient to tackle the situation appropriately. As you point out in your letter, there is an urgent need for additional efforts. It is indeed important to support vulnerable countries, the development of diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines, and regional surveillance and coordination. It is also essential to ensure sufficient supplies of personal protective equipment to health professionals, these being on the frontline in the handling of COVID-19.

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Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland  
Co-Chair  
Mr Elhadj As Sy  
Co-Chair  
Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB)

E-mail: VDzau@nas.edu
The Commission’s response to COVID-19 covers all these areas. In this context, I would in particular like to mention that we have mobilised more than 400 million euro to boost global preparedness, prevention and containment of the virus inside and outside Europe. Part of this funding will support the World Health Organization, in particular the global preparedness and response plan.

For detailed information on the Commission’s response to COVID-19, I kindly invite you to consult the Commission’s dedicated COVID-19 website via the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/index_en.

As regards the funding gap of 8 billion USD identified by your Board, I am pleased to inform you that the Commission is organising a pledging conference with the aim of closing this gap and we are closely working together with the GPMB and other partners to make this a successful event. As there is no time to waste, the event is foreseen to take place on 4 May, and we will be in contact with you again shortly.

Thank you very much again for your letter and for your continuous support.

Yours sincerely,

Ursula von der Leyen