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Symposium Articles

Reflections on Global Health Governance

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

Abstract

A tribute to Professor Larry Gostin for a special issue of the Journal of Law, Medicine, and Ethics to mark the 10th anniversary of the launch of "Global Health Law".

Keywords: global health; global health law; global health security

I have known Professor Larry Gostin for many years, as a scholar, colleague, and friend. In the world of global health, he is a force of nature, whether in his pioneering academic work, his years of service on many boards and advisory committees, or as a committed advocate and fearless critic. Indeed, Professor Gostin's scholarship, leadership, advocacy, influence and reputation continue to advance norms for both global health security and equity. His achievements are testament to his ability to deftly combine academic excellence, prolific research and global health leadership and impact.

Professor Gostin's distinguished career in global health law has focused on elevating the concerns and rights of the most vulnerable in society. His scholarship has helped to define the field, including his now-seminal text *Global Health Law* (Harvard University Press, 2014). He has played a fundamental role in cementing the concept of equity at the center of public health. He was an early and passionate advocate for the rights and dignity of people living with HIV/AIDS and mental disabilities, and a strong supporter of the work to strengthen the International Health Regulations (2005). He has worked tirelessly since then advocating for an equity and science-based approach to the development of the WHO Pandemic Agreement.

Professor Gostin's leadership as the Faculty Director of the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law and the Founding O'Neill Chair in Global Health Law has shaped the institute's research agenda and fostered collaboration across disciplines. As Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Center on National and Global Health Law, Professor Gostin's expertise has directly shaped international health policies.

Professor Gostin's numerous accolades reflect his immense contributions to the field. His book, "Global Health Security: A Blueprint for the Future," received the Association of American Publishers PROSE Award in 2021, and he was awarded the Adam Yarmolinsky Medal by the National Academy of Medicine for his distinguished service to science and health.

Beyond his scholarly achievements, Professor Gostin has been a leader in reforming global health institutions and law, and a champion of equity and human rights, including serving on three major global commissions on lessons learned from the 2015 West Africa Ebola epidemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he was an adviser to government and international agencies, and a powerful voice for equity.

More recently, Professor Gostin served on WHO's Review Committee regarding amendments to the International Health Regulations and worked with WHO and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body to draft the new Pandemic Agreement. He has served on, and often chaired, a host of WHO panels on issues including institutional reform, migration, mental health, and gender, equity, and human rights.

I thank and admire Professor Gostin for his continuing leadership, scholarship, advocacy and unwavering commitment to global health and justice. His dedication to global health law serves as an inspiration to all who strive for a healthier and more equitable world, and I look forward to working with him in the years to come.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, M.S., Ph.D., is Director-General of the World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, and is the first African to serve in the role. Previously, he served as the Ethiopian Minister of Health and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Email: dgoffice@who.int

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