

Global Health Diplomacy 101

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What is Global Health?

Possible meanings:

- State of health?
- Objective?
- Area of knowledge and practice?

Existing definitions highlight key elements:

- *transnational issues, interdisciplinarity, global forces and actors*
- *focus on both prevention and care, health for all worldwide*

Global health vs. *public health and international health?*

International health – used traditionally in relation to assistance to developing countries, mostly on bilateral basis

Public health - focuses on issues that affect the health of population of a specific country or community

Global health, in comparison, focuses on challenges of global scale through multi-lateral cooperation

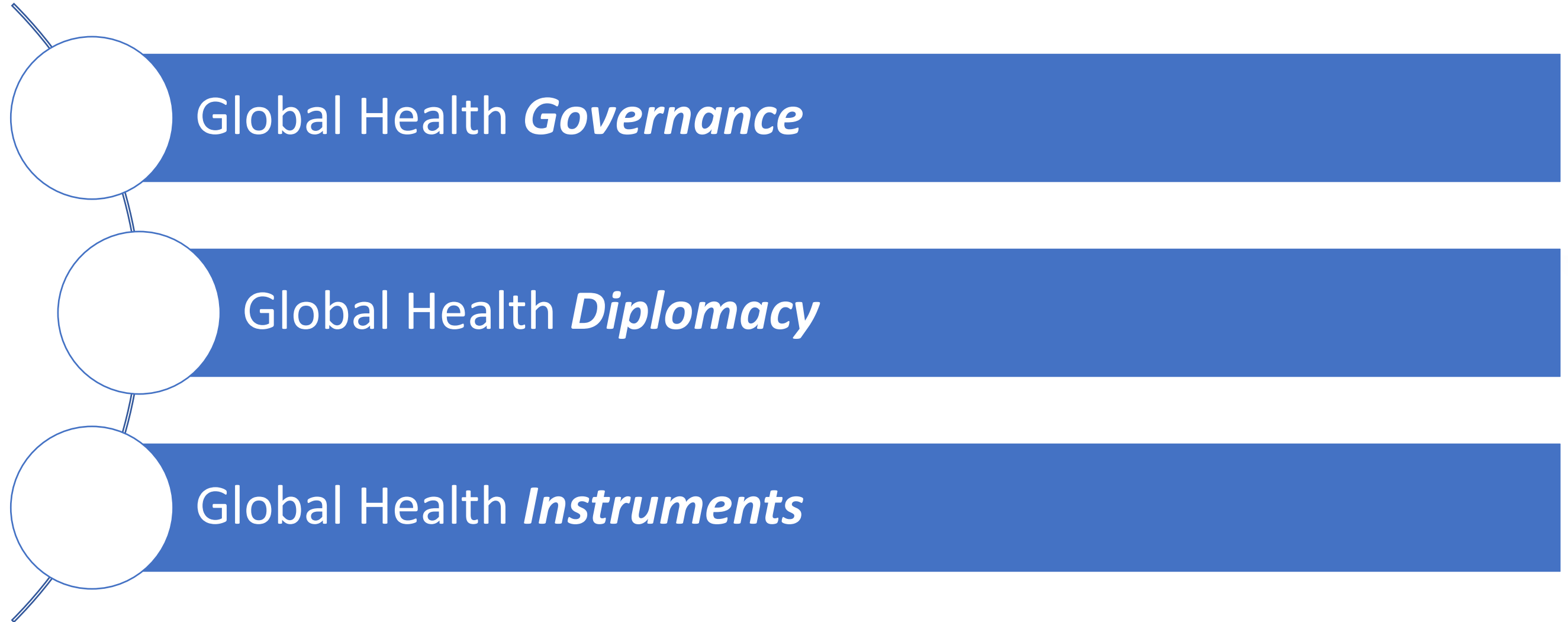
In summary, global health builds-on – *but is different from* – public health and international health which historically preceded global health

Global Health Diplomacy – *Many definitions*

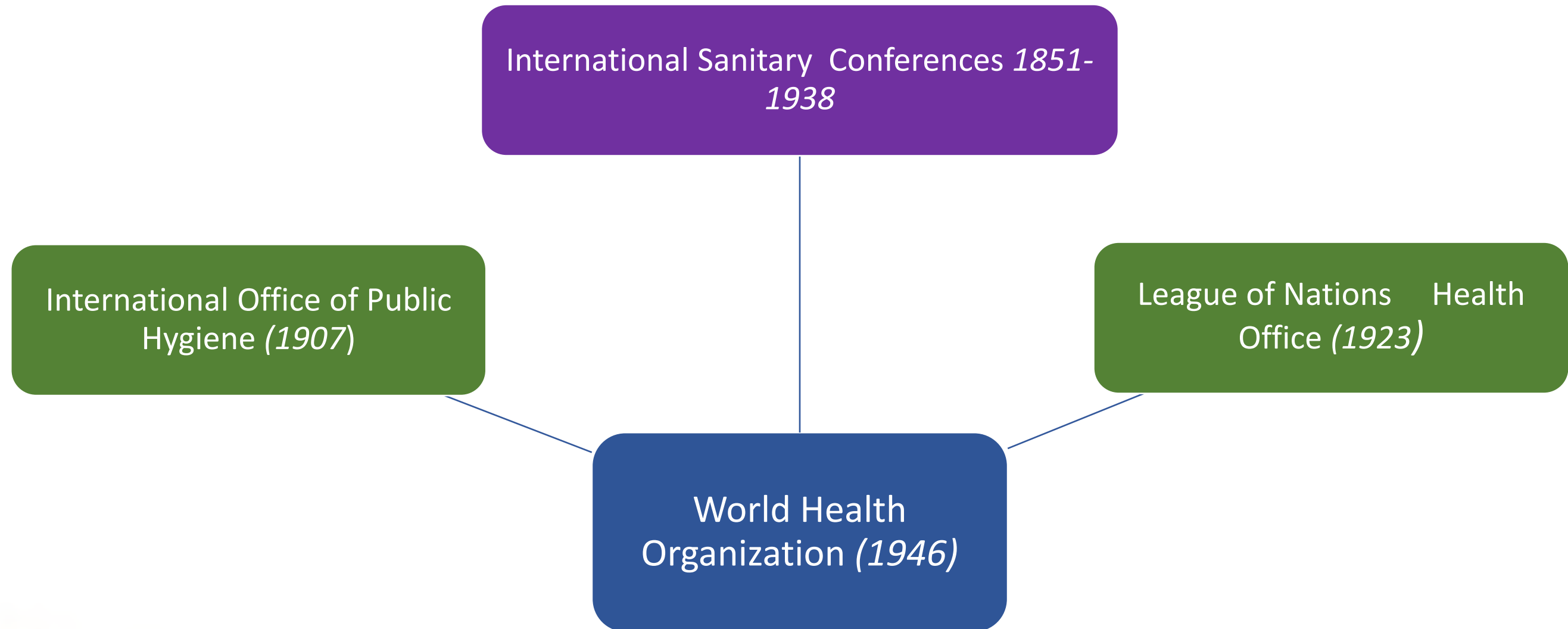
Global Health Diplomacy...describes the practices by which multiple actors (governments and non-state actors) attempt to coordinate and orchestrate **global policy solutions** to improve health (Ruckert, Labonté et al 2016)

Global Health diplomacy - as is with all diplomacy – is essentially a political process intertwining domestic and foreign policy with that of global health.

Global Health – *key domains*



G/H Governance – *history*



G/H governance – *more complex in 21st century*

Global health governance: Global organizations with direct mandate on health (*WHO, UNAIDS, Global Funds, GAVI etc.*)

Global governance for health: Global non-health organizations influencing health (*UN system, WTO, WB etc.*)

Governance for global health: national strategies for GH, policies of regional and cross-regional organizations (*regional blocks, G20, BRICS etc.*)

In addition, civil society and other non-state actors increasingly participate and exert influence on all three governance spaces

International health instruments – *categories*

- Pre-WHO

- WHO

- Non-WHO

- Bilateral

- Regional

- Global

- Hard law

- Soft law

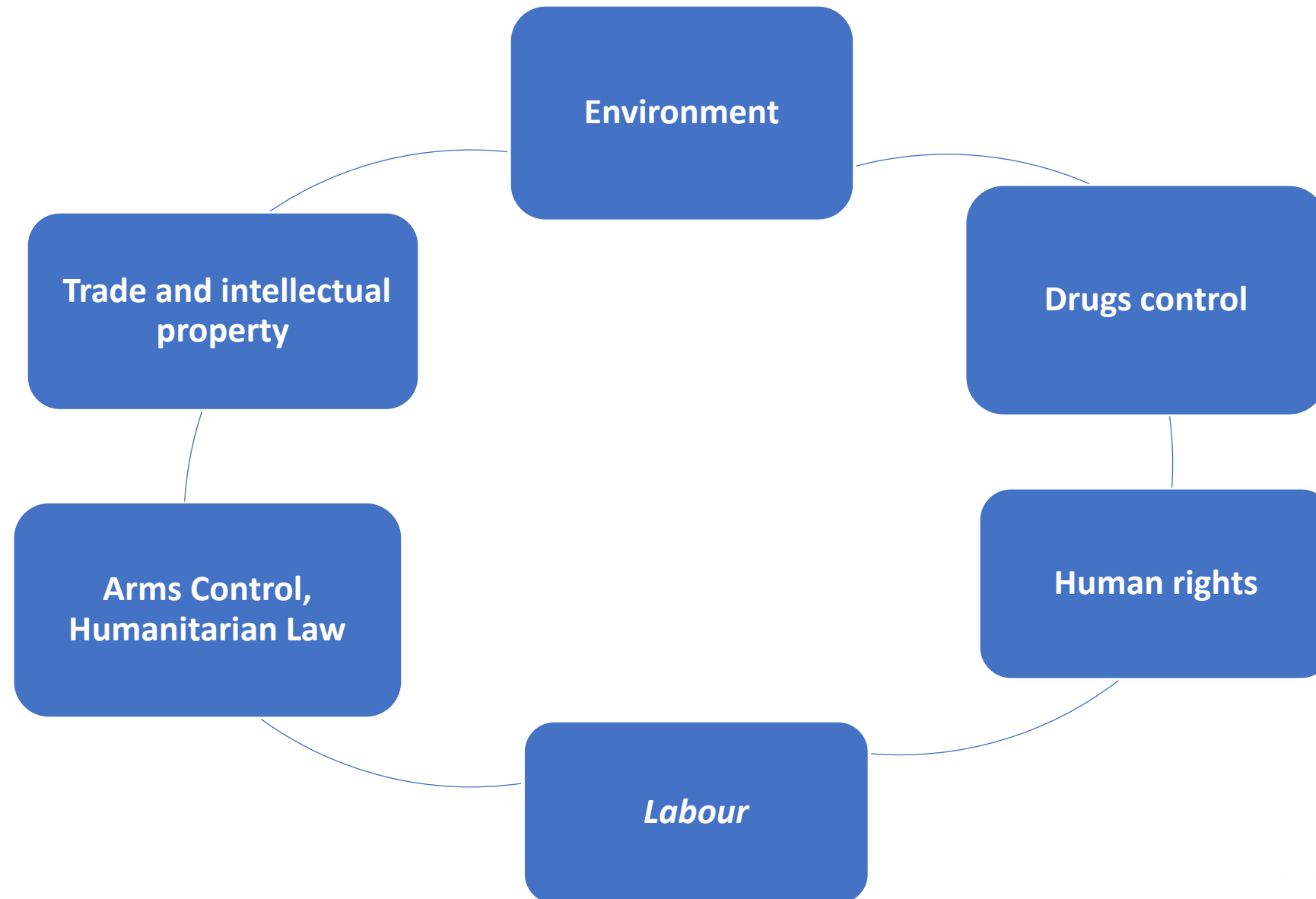
Global health instruments under WHO

World Health Assembly can adopt:

- *Recommendations* (Article 23 of WHO Constitution)
- *Regulations* (Article 21)
- *Conventions and agreements* (Article 19)

Conventions and regulations are considered as "hard law",
Recommendations (*codes, frameworks, action plans etc*) - as "soft law"

Non-WHO: treaties with health impact



Non-WHO: non-binding instruments with health impact

✓ Set of internationally agreed goals

- *Millennium Development Goals (2000)*
- *Sustainable Development Goals (2015)*

✓ **Declarations** (i.e. UNGA High-Level Meeting Declarations on NCDs, AMR, TB, UHC (2011-19))

✓ **Frameworks** (i.e. for Sustainable Development Cooperation), **Compacts** (i.e. for Migration)

✓ **Other** (i.e. Strategies, Resolutions, Plans, Charters etc)

Global Health Diplomacy

Negotiating health issues *that cross national boundaries, are global in nature and require global agreements to address them*

Protecting and promoting health *amongst broader - often conflicting – economic and other interests of countries*

GHD – *how it evolved?*

19th century – *first international health conferences and conventions*

First half 20th century - *first international health agencies created*

Mid-20th century - *UN and WHO created, stronger basis for int. health cooperation*

End 20th century – *health concerns linked to globalization heightened need for int. cooperation and diplomacy*

21st century:

- *new global challenges, security concerns, proliferation of global actors, and SDGs lifted global health into high political & foreign policy agenda*
- *Covid-19 and concerns for similar mega-threats further heighten the role of GHD*

GHD: *dimensions*

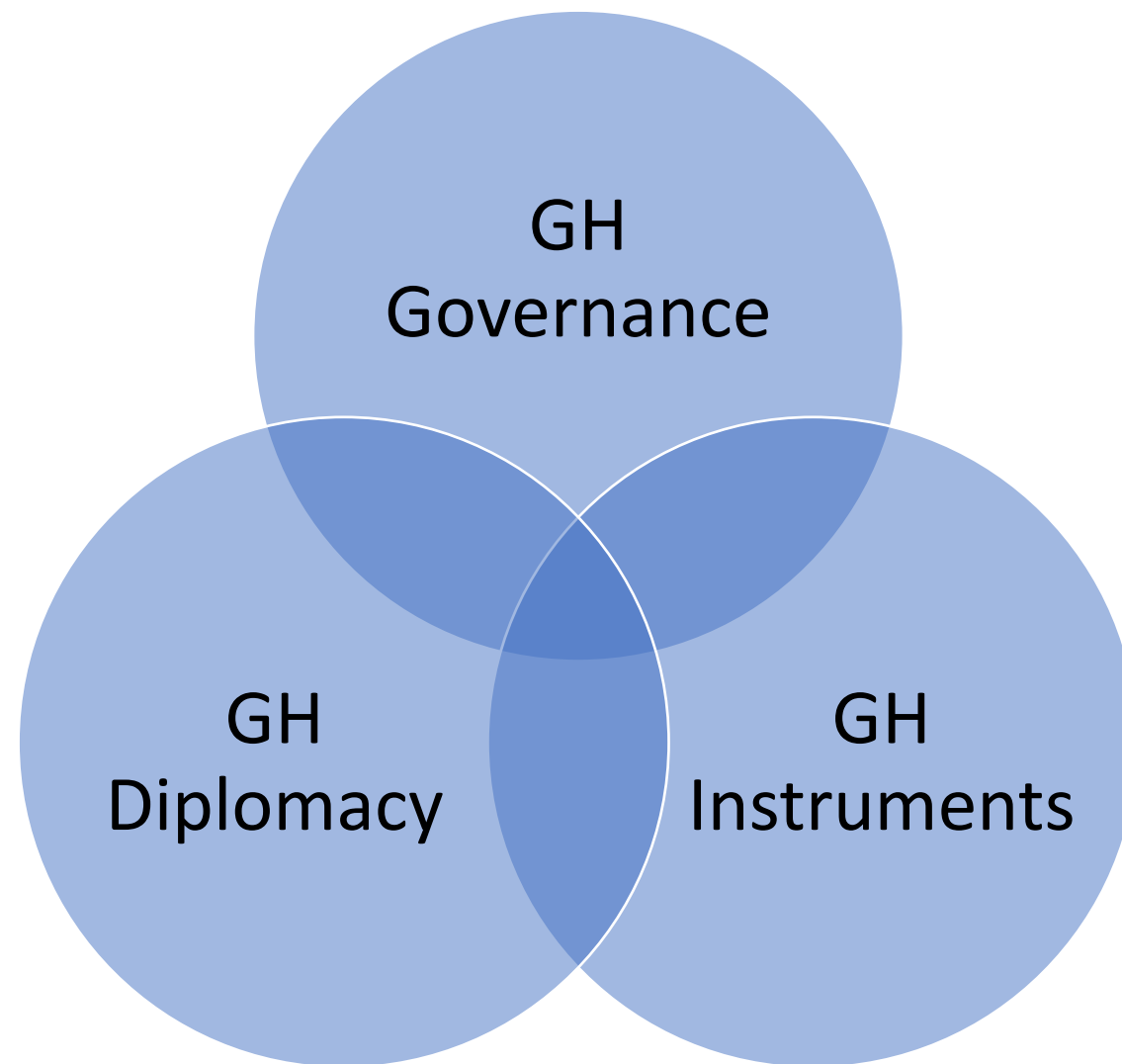
- ✓ *Promoting health in the face of **other** (often conflicting) **interests***
- ✓ *Establishing new **governance mechanisms** in support of health*
- ✓ *Creating **alliances** in support of health*
- ✓ *Building and managing **donor and stakeholder** relations*
- ✓ *Responding to public health **crises***
- ✓ *Improving **relations** between countries through health and well-being*
- ✓ *Contributing to **peace and security***

GHD dimensions *(cont)*.

Overall, GHD is more than just negotiations.

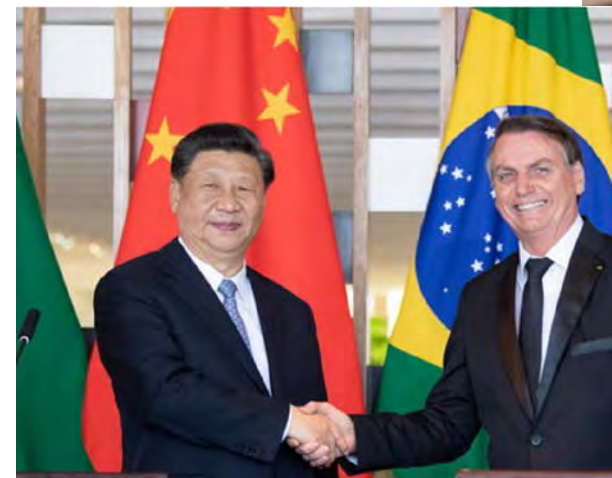
It includes the building and maintaining of relationships, the gathering of information, the establishment of goodwill and the use of health as “soft power”.

GHD in broader global health: *interconnectedness and interplay*



Global Health Diplomacy More Important than Ever

- Our economic and health future depends on it
- Dr Tedros – “no-one is safe until everyone is safe” – health security is a contested term, should be understood as “solidarity”, not as an expression of nationalism or national security
- Debate/action or lack of it on COVID-19



Cross-cutting Nature of Global Health Diplomacy

- Multiple actors attempt to coordinate and orchestrate global policy solutions
- Political process in domestic policy – health diplomacy does and will play an increasingly important role
- Multilateralism under transformation
- Decolonization of global health
- Methods of diplomacy changing (social media)
- More women involved than ever before in diplomacy
- Feminist foreign policies



Health is everyone's business

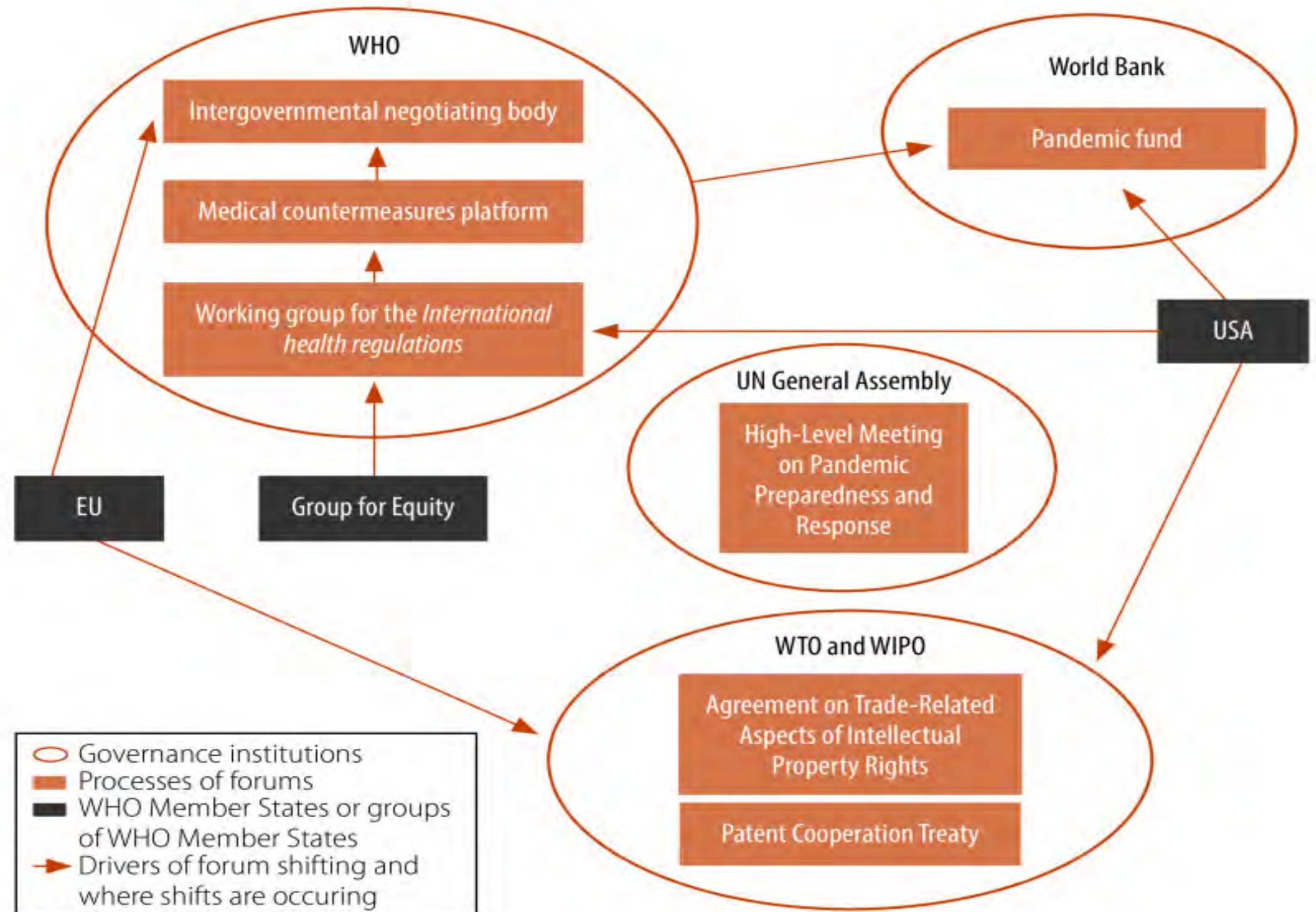
Regional Bodies and Clubs

- Foreign policy and geopolitics
- G7 and G20 decreased role
- Trade, IP (WTO, WIPO)
- Climate change
- GHD takes place in various fora - broad view and understanding required
- Alliances in different places - start in one international body, goes somewhere else



Forum shifting in search of more efficient outcomes....

- Increasingly more complex landscape
- Potential erosion of WHO's role
- Limited number of players lead



WHO

- Politicized pandemic erodes authority
- Recent focus COVID-19 driven
- Reviews of the role and powers
- Constitution allows for treaties, but best instruments still debated





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