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Rethinking global health governance in a changing international order: can innovative 'soft power' diplomacy of the 'rising powers' (rps) contribute to the significant progress in advancing treatment and prevention of infectious diseases in the global south ?

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This idea of this presentation stems largely from the dismal experience and lessons from the initially slow and relatively ineffective global response to both the 2014-16 West African and the current Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Ebola virus epidemic. In the light of the end of the liberal international order (witness Trump's 'America First' approach in international relations) and decline in the importance of global institutions and the multilateral system, the presentation will argue that the 'Rising Powers' (RPs) of the larger emerging economies in the global South (e.g. China, India, the presentation will argue that South Korea, Turkey, Brazil, Indonesia, etc.) can move in and play a 'leadership' or influential role in championing a much-needed reform to the global health architecture aimed at improving the global response to epidemics and infectious diseases. The prominence of health-related objectives among the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Agenda 2030, provides an opportunity for the RPs to use their increasingly influential role in the international development cooperation landscape, particularly soft-power diplomacy, to precipitate innovations in global health governance. Over the past decade, some RPs have incorporated distinct healthcare improvement projects in their development assistance programmes in African and other developing countries. In 2017, the RPs were instrumental in securing the election of the African Union-supported candidate (Ethiopia's Foreign Minister) to head the global health body, the WHO, which is an indication of the RPs' potential ability to introduce reforms and innovations in the global health architecture from the 'inside'. Prior to this, the BRICS group of RPs - (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) - were already becoming a new force in global health, especially in terms of

their material support for strengthening of domestic health systems to address infectious diseases and progress towards universal health coverage. It is from this perspective that the presentation will call for a combination of the RPs' health diplomacy and development partnership as an important tool for responding to post-2015 global health challenges. The presentation will come up with suggestions regarding specific approaches and actions that can be embraced by the RPs toward what is needed for: (1) stimulating innovation in global health governance; and (2) strengthening health systems and health security at country and regional levels for improved response to the treatment and control of infectious diseases. These suggestions are premised on the understanding that both development challenges and economic situations are changing in the developing regions and, therefore, the global order needs to adapt. While current deliberations on global health policy tend to focus largely on what will be needed to achieve new health targets set in the SDGs, the presentation – in identifying a 'leadership' role for the RPs - will argue that more is needed on 'how' to respond to post-2015 health challenges. How can the RPs be a champion for global governance reform and innovation that is aimed at producing strong, resilient and equitable global systems that enable all people to live healthy lives? How can the rising powers use soft power diplomacy to enhance disease surveillance and detection capacities, as well as promote improved regional and international coordination in responding to epidemics and emerging health threats? How can the rising provide incentives for investment in R&D and manufacturing of medicines to tackle neglected and poverty-related diseases?

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