

WHO gets a Christmas gift



It was clear that there were big plans for omicron when it took the World Health Organization just two days to classify it as a "[variant of concern](#)." It was first reported to the WHO from South Africa on Nov. 24, and on Nov. 26 the classification and naming were announced. By Nov. 29, [WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus](#) was using omicron to promote a new global accord on pandemics. "Our current system disincentivizes countries from alerting others to threats that will inevitably land on their shores... Covid-19 has exposed and exacerbated fundamental weaknesses in the global architecture for pandemic preparedness and response... The best way we can address them is with a legally binding agreement between nations." By Dec. 1, an agreement to kickstart a global process to draft and negotiate a [pandemic convention](#) was reached. The treaty will presumably grant the WHO the authority to declare a legally binding pandemic. If the Czech Parliament wanted to rescind the pandemic alert, it could not. Yes, omicron is undoubtedly a big Christmas gift, as some experts say. But for WHOM?

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