



**PMAC** | PRINCE MAHIDOL  
AWARD CONFERENCE **2024**

**PL0**

**GEOPOLITICS, HUMAN SECURITY AND HEALTH EQUITY IN AN ERA OF  
POLYCRISES**

## | BACKGROUND

Geopolitics, often overlooked in the realm of global health, holds significant influence over our understanding, addressing, and overcoming health challenges. By shifting our focus towards geopolitics, we can gain a better comprehension of the forces that shape the economic, social, and physical landscapes affecting the health of individuals. This includes a critical examination of international, regional and national governance mechanisms including the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions. Recent years, there has been a renewed focus on addressing persistent inequalities in influence, resources, and health, shedding light on historical injustices such as colonialism and imperialism contributing to health inequities and impacting progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the pledge to leave no one behind.

## | OBJECTIVES

The PMAC 2024 aims to explore the impact of geopolitics on global health since World War II, adopting a historical and forward looking perspective, and deliberate on how these influences can be contested or mitigated as we strive to create a fairer and more equitable world and get back on track for achieving health related SDGs in amidst the challenges of polycrises.



## Panelist

### Atul Gawande

*Assistant Administrator for Global Health*

United States Agency for International Development  
United States of America

Dr. Atul Gawande is the Assistant Administrator for Global Health at the U.S. Agency for International Development, where he oversees a bureau that manages over \$4 billion with a footprint of over 900 staff committed to advancing equitable delivery of public health approaches around the world. The Global Health Bureau focuses on work that improves lives everywhere--from preventing child and maternal deaths to controlling the HIV/AIDs epidemic, to combating infectious diseases and preparing for future outbreaks. Prior to joining the Biden-Harris Administration, he was a practicing surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital and a professor at Harvard Medical School and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. He was founder and chair of Ariadne Labs, a joint center for health systems innovation, and of Lifebox, a nonprofit making surgery safer globally. From 2018-2020, he was also CEO of Haven, the Amazon, Berkshire Hathaway, and JP Morgan Chase healthcare venture. In addition, Atul was a longtime staff writer for The New Yorker magazine and has written four New York Times best-selling books: *Complications*, *Better*, *The Checklist Manifesto*, and *Being Mortal*.