

# Portugal

**World Health Organization**  
**150<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Board**  
(24<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021)

Item 3 Outcome of the special session of the WHA to consider developing a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response  
**Geneva, 24th January 2021**

Chair,

Excellences,

Portugal aligns itself with the statement made on behalf-of the EU and its Member States.

As the past 2 years have shown, health emergencies not only appear unexpectedly but also force upon us major challenges. This pandemic, as few health issues before, has dominated the global public health agenda and the global economy. Its political implications can be seen everywhere. This is why the Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies is of the utmost importance and relevance.

We trust that the path we all initiated at the 74th World Assembly will continue to move us forward, together. The constructive manner in which our work is proceeding and the wide Member States participation are good signs.

Chair,

Health threats may well become more and more frequent. Therefore, we must focus our work not only on what we can do immediately but also on the longer term impact of the various technical recommendations.

We all know that we won't be truly prepared if we can't fully agree on the shape of the global health architecture, with the WHO at its centre.

Portugal supports the idea of developing a comprehensive new international instrument on pandemic preparedness. Such an instrument would be the expression of the global will to act together and ambitiously, giving us the opportunity to address key issues previously identified as shortfalls.

We call on all Member States to renew our common ambition to work towards a better prepared, more resilient, united, and fairer health world. Portugal is ready to fully participate in this effort.

Thank you