

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)
150TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND – VIRTUAL MEETING
JANUARY 24-29, 2022

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Influenza Preparedness

Agenda Item 15.4

WRITTEN STATEMENT:

- The United States thanks the Secretariat for the report and urges continued focus and prioritization on both seasonal and pandemic influenza preparedness. We know that there will likely be another influenza pandemic and strengthening influenza preparedness has improved overall global readiness and response, with many countries leveraging their existing, robust influenza capacities for the COVID-19 response.
- We celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS), recognizing the numerous positive contributions this unique, Member State led, collaborative network has made to influenza preparedness and surveillance efforts. The proven capacity, functionality, and adaptability of GISRS has served as a critical component of the COVID-19 response. We must ensure that GISRS remains strong for the next 70 years. We encourage and support the development and evolution of GISRS+ and believe that we should continue to build upon GISRS' capacity as the foundation for SARS-CoV-2 and broader respiratory disease surveillance going forward.

- Influenza virus sharing is essential to the success of GISRS and to our collective ability to prepare for, detect and manage seasonal and pandemic influenza. We must work together to ensure that National Influenza Centers, Influenza Collaborating Centers, and Essential Regulatory Labs continue to be able to rapidly, openly and continuously share data, sequences, and samples of seasonal viruses so that our understanding of circulating seasonal viruses and vaccine strain selection are guided by the best available science and evidence. We call on countries to share on countries to share Influenza Collaborating Centers and Essential Regulatory Labs, in addition to National Influenza Centers.
- Similarly, we must commit to rapidly, openly and continuously sharing pandemic influenza data, sequences, and samples – including addressing challenges in seamless and timely sharing – and work together to maintain a strong, functioning Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework (PIP-FW), which has helped many countries strengthen their pandemic preparedness.

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