

**Age152<sup>nd</sup> SESSION of the WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**(Geneva, 30 January- 7th February 2023)**

**9:30 AM (CET)**



सत्यमेव जयते

**Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
Government of India**

**Agenda 21.1: Prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment**

(Word count: 370)

**Thank you Chair**

**India believes that governance structure within WHO needs to be revisited on the issue.** Report of sexual harassment and taking action in such cases alone may not be sufficient.

WHO needs to examine on how such nefarious crimes of sexual abuse & harassment perpetuate for long without getting reported or detected in the first place.

A clear message of non-tolerance and exemplary punishment in coordination with local law authorities will convey the required message on the issue.

**It is important to create a mechanism for early identification and address these incidents at a very nascent stage, by addressing the socio-cultural context which is the main cause of such incidents.**

WHO country offices need to work in close coordination with local governments and authorities to safeguard against any form of misconduct.

India understands the need for suspension of **Financial Rule XII, 112.3 to fast track the investigation related to sexual exploitation for specific cases.**

**But It is equally important to deliberate for such a framework, which enables investigating authorities to complete investigation in such cases, in a very short span of time.**

**Chair,**

**Institutional, financial, and programmatic resources** are needed not only in high-risk settings but as part of preventive tools to address such issues. .

Some considerations for ensuring predictable resource allocations could be :

- Earmark budget for PRESAH such as up to 15% of all budget centers to ensure funds for PRSEAH through common consensus.
- Designate dedicated human resources in every office.
- Invest in capacity building and awareness generation on PRSEAH, both internal and external.
- Have a pool of experts available for PRSEAH roles and for deployment into health emergency operations with a broader systems approach and in-depth country context knowledge.

**Chair,**

To ensure safeguards of workforce working in different countries, WHO should focus on two key areas :

- **Align its policies with national law, actively involve local authorities, conduct regular training, and ensure vernacular communications.**

- **Have a coherent system, streamline reporting, delegation of authority, develop a context specific, risk informed, and risk management for PREASH in field operations.**

**Chair,**

India unequivocally condemns all such acts and looks forward to stringent and exemplary action in all such cases.

**Thank you!**