

## **DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

**Item 14.2: Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)**

**Item 15.1: Strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience**

**Item 15.2: WHO’s work in health emergencies**

Chairperson,

First of all, the DPRK delegation would like to express our gratitude to WHO Secretariat for its active efforts for strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience, and especially for the coordination of global response to COVID-19.

In this regard, we express our full support to the SEAR regional statement delivered by the distinguished delegate of Bangladesh.

In the past 3 years since the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), more than 766 million infected cases and 6.9 million deaths have been recorded globally and many people are still suffering from Long COVID.

This undeniable reality requires every member state to establish concrete strategy for preparedness not only for COVID-19 but also for future pandemics, while building up and strengthening core capacities of International Health Regulations (IHR).

COVID-19 has been a challenge but also an opportunity for WHO and all member states. As per the experiences and lessons learnt from this pandemic, we recognize the necessity of amending IHR (2005) while supporting the development of new “Pandemic Treaty” as well.

In this regard, we assert to pay due attention to avoiding duplications between IHR and Pandemic Treaty, ensuring equity and respecting sovereignty of member states while never allowing any attempt to politicalize the organization’s activities.

Besides, WHO, as an international organization dedicated to global public health, should drive strengthening preparedness and response to public health emergencies in all countries and regions and across the world, thereby play the leading role in overcoming current and future health emergencies.

Meanwhile, it is also important to establish a comprehensive and resilient public health and anti-epidemic system that is ready to respond to public health emergencies and disease outbreaks in member states.

Chairperson,

Early detection of and timely response to public health emergencies and threats, in other words, taking measures in advance to prevent disease rather than treatment after getting sick, is an effective way to prevent and minimize the devastation from infectious diseases.

Preventive medicine is the basic principle of public health policy in DPRK. The DPRK Public Health Law regulates that the government regards it as an important duty to take advance measures to prevent people from diseases and will direct primary efforts to prevention in the public health services.

Accordingly, a household doctor system is established throughout the country and, based on it, routine services of health screening, examination and immunization are provided to the population thereby risk factors of diseases are constantly under control.

In April last year, a national public health crisis emerged due to inflow of the stealth omicron virus into our country. However, we have achieved a great success in stabilizing and restoring the anti-epidemic situation over 100 days since COVID-19 made inroads into the territory of our Republic and 91 days since we switched the national prevention work to the maximum emergency epidemic prevention system against the rapid spread of the disease nationwide.

Thanks to the household doctor system, emergency medical service system, tele-medicine system and other people-oriented and advanced medical services, the identification of fever cases, screening and examination of the entire population were undertaken every day and quarantine and treatment were conducted in a correct way.

The lessons we have drawn from the public health crisis can be condensed into two in general. First, we should keep up a high degree of tension without permitting any slight carelessness and slackness as the anti-epidemic work drags on. Second, we should scrupulously build the national crisis response capacity, the anti-epidemic capacity at any cost.

Pushing forward building up the national crisis response capacity to reach the global standard is the firm will of the government of our Republic.

The DPRK will further strengthen national crisis response capacity to public health emergencies to defend the safety and security of the state and people and enhance close collaboration with WHO for the health and well-being of the people in the world.

In conclusion, the DPRK supports and cosponsors the draft resolution proposed by the Russian Federation under item 15.2 "WHO's work in health emergencies" regarding Implementation of resolution WHA75.11 (2022).

Thank you.