



European Union Statement

WHO

76th World Health Assembly

(21-30 May 2023)

Item 15.1 : Strengthening WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies

- **Strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience**
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Geneva, 23 May 2023

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EU Statement

Chair,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina* as well as the potential candidate country Georgia align themselves with this statement.

Strengthening prevention of, preparedness for and response to global health emergencies and WHO's central role therein is an EU priority.

The EU welcomes WHO's central and coordinating role and its leadership on the multilateral approach to pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. We highlight the need to work with all relevant partners, across all relevant sectors to strengthen synergies, efficiency and coherence and to close gaps and avoid duplication. We appreciate and request more information on WHO's work in humanitarian situations, fostering access to health services for persons in vulnerable situations.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The EU has and continues to be actively engaged in realizing evidence-based lessons learnt from the pandemic and other health emergencies.

The EU is committed to craft by May 2024 an ambitious WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and has made detailed proposals to ensure impactful results on the ground for our common good. For negotiations to succeed, it is critical for all WHO member states to work towards the necessary convergence. We invite all other initiatives we take in global health to support this central endeavour.

The EU reaffirms the importance of the International Health Regulations and recalls the need for national governments to effectively implement and strengthen core capacities under the reformed IHR and the future Pandemic Agreement. We note the continued work on preparedness reviews and monitoring.

The EU calls for adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and urges all Members States to step up their contributions to this end and strongly considering financing new and existing funding streams such as the Pandemic Fund and WHO's Contingency Fund for Emergencies.

We look forward to a tangible outcome of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response, including on the role of other UN organisations, to further advance work in this important area. In this regard, we call for a short and succinct political declaration complementary to and supportive of the ongoing work here in Geneva. The declaration has an important and strategic role in guiding our future work in this area, presenting us with the opportunity to support the conclusion in 2024 of an ambitious and legally binding pandemic agreement; promote continued high-level political leadership, complementing and supporting the pandemic agreement; underline the importance of fostering equitable access to medical countermeasures; stress the importance of sustainable financing for both preparedness and response to pandemic threats; and underscore the importance of effective multilateralism.

We also acknowledge the importance of the UN High-level meetings on UHC and tuberculosis, and the need to ensure synergies and coherence with the High-Level Meeting on Prevention, Preparedness and Response.

Lastly, the EU welcomes the in-depth discussions on the WHO's ten proposals for health emergency preparedness, response, and resilience. We will continue to

participate constructively in this dynamic exercise, where Member States ultimately decide on pursuing specific topics. We will be pleased to analyse document WHA76/10. Unfortunately, late sending on 19th of May does not allow for our consideration or any decision at this stage.

Thank you.