



**Statement by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) at the  
76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly, 21-30 May, 2023**  
Delivered by IDLO Permanent Observer to the United Nations in Geneva, Mark Cassayre

Agenda Item 3 – Plenary: “WHO at 75: Saving lives, driving health for all”

Thank you, Chair.

As this is the first time we take the floor as an observer at the World Health Assembly, let me first thank the Member States and WHO for supporting IDLO’s participation in this important forum.

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) commends the World Health Organization for the extraordinary progresses in promoting public health outcomes globally over the past 75 years and thanks Dr Tedros for his leadership and his call to a renewed drive for health equity.

In fact, we continue to witness deep inequalities in access to healthcare and disproportionate impacts of health crises on marginalized communities. COVID-19 has redefined the concept of vulnerability. As we have seen, while no one was immune to the impact of the pandemic: the most severely affected were those already living in conditions of poverty and exclusion. Ensuring that no one is left behind in the recovery requires a comprehensive approach that addresses not only the immediate needs of health systems but also the underlying social and economic factors that affect health outcomes.

IDLO believes that the rule of law has a crucial role to play in promoting health for all, while addressing inequalities. As a global intergovernmental organization dedicated to advancing the rule of law, we recognize that health is a fundamental human right and a key component of sustainable development and peace. There is no area of public health which does not, in some way, depend on the rule of law and good governance. Strong legal frameworks can help to ensure access to health services, tackle discrimination, protect the rights of vulnerable populations, and promote accountability and transparency in the health sector. They can also facilitate partnerships between stakeholders, including governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

IDLO remains committed to supporting countries and collaborating with the WHO to advance the rule of a law as a tool to achieve the right to health for all.

Thank you.