

*Address of the Minister of Health of the Slovak Republic
76th World Health Assembly
Item 3 Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
22 May 2023*

*Dear President of the World Health Assembly,
Distinguished Director-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Slovakia ~~(fully)~~ aligns itself with statement delivered by Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

I am delighted to address this Assembly in the year of the 75th Anniversary of the WHO's existence, given its unique positioning within the UN system because at the end of the day, it is health and saving lives that matters. Therefore, I would like to highlight the WHO's scientific pillars and expertise as well as its human capacities headed by the Director-General. Alongside, I would like to underline their merits for a tenacious work and for shaping the Organization to its present appearance.

This year also marks the 30th Anniversary of the Slovak membership in WHO. This membership represents for us a partnership and guidance with a constant drive for the people's health improvement. We value very much this collaboration and we are committed to further contribute to its efficient and transparent operations.

*While WHO declared the end of the COVID-19 pandemic as a global health emergency, its serious consequences persist as well as geopolitical tensions including the tragic war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which has **grave** implications for the health system, UHC and health financing **in Slovakia**. This is an urgent reminder that we need much stronger WHO, while building efficient synergies with other international fora such as the UN General Assembly.*

Furthermore, knowing the high importance of timely information sharing, the Slovak Republic supports the scientific and technical cooperation of states and entities within the WHO, piloted endeavours on peer reviews of national health preparedness and appreciates the important collaboration regarding the national health information system assessment, which is to take place next month in Slovakia.

In order to advance the progress in Sustainable Development Goals, I would like to stress that sustained work on scaling up the programme budget needs to continue.

We need to move beyond the health in our societies, and promote the role of health to help building resilience against fragility as well as the cohesion where there is disunity.

Let me close by referring to Dr. Tedros' words, that "the legacy of the pandemic must be a new recognition that investments in local health security are investments in global health security and in healthier, safer, fairer and more peaceful societies".