

Portugal

World Health Organization 150th Session of the Executive Board (24th - 29th January 2021)

7 f) Progress achieved in the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases
and the promotion of mental health
Geneva, 27th January 2021

Chair,

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by France on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

Portugal attaches the utmost importance to the promotion of mental health. We commend the work of the secretariat on the NCD implementation road map, particularly the recognition that mental disorders and other mental health conditions contribute to a high global NCD burden. We note with concern that mental disorders, other mental health conditions and neurological disorders are one of the leading causes of premature death and disability globally.

The statistics speak for themselves: close to 1 billion people experience a mental disorder during their lifetime, including 1 in 7 teenagers. More than 1 in every 100 deaths is due to suicide, which is also the fourth leading cause of death in young people. Globally, US\$ 1 trillion is lost annually in the economy due to depression and anxiety and the related absenteeism.

Chair,

Over the past two years, we watched with concern as the COVID pandemic triggered also a global mental health and human rights emergency. The harmful impact of this related pandemic should not be measured only by the mortality and morbidity directly caused by the disease itself, but also by all its indirect effects.

With this in mind, we call upon all Member States to consider the WHO's available options of cost-effective interventions on mental health programmes, including by involving civil society institutions and further developing the Quality Rights initiative, which Portugal proudly supports. It is urgent to give more attention and increase investment in all mental health related programmes and projects.

Thank you