



Kingdom of Eswatini

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Mr. Chairman, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Kingdom of Eswatini on agenda item 12.1

The Kingdom of Eswatini, like many countries, is using the lessons learnt from the COVID 19 pandemic to inform strategies and plans aimed at strengthening the national architecture for health emergency preparedness and resilience.

Eswatini concurs with WHO Director-General who states that there are still too many uncertainties and gaps in surveillance, testing, vaccination, treatment, and health systems among others, to conclude that the pandemic is over, or even assume that the world is prepared to handle health emergencies. Unfortunately, in this current state of affairs, UHC will remain elusive.

Cognisant of the existing gaps in our emergency preparedness and response, and the urgency **with which** these need to be addressed, Eswatini is investing in improving surveillance (through IDSR strengthening) and coordination. We have operationalized the PHEOC and are currently working on a framework to establish a National Public Health Institute. **We are also prioritizing on the capacity building of health workers at pre-service and in-service. Also, a BSL level II laboratory has been completed and is operational, and a specific**

budget from domestic funds will be ring-fenced to cater for health emergencies.

Eswatini recognises the significant role of effective partnerships with bilateral and multilateral organisations, as well as local communities. We applaud the WHO country office, Africa CDC, US CDC, and the Global Fund for assisting the country through this journey. The world requires joint efforts from the international community to counter the threats of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, **Eswatini recognizes the significant role that Taiwan plays** in global health efforts.

Taiwan stands firm in its commitment to work with WHO and the international community to end the **current** Pandemic and to help in preparing for **and responding to** future health emergencies. Thus, Eswatini would like to urge WHO to remain neutral and professional **and** to include Taiwan in all **its** technical meetings, activities, and mechanisms, as well as **to** invite Taiwan to participate in the WHA as an observer.

I thank you.