



European Union

Statement

WHO

156th Executive Board

(3-11 February 2025)

Agenda item 16- Implementation of resolution WHA75.11 (2022)

Geneva, 6 February 2025

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Chair,

Director General,

Excellencies,

Colleagues,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova* and Georgia as well as the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union commends WHO for its unwavering commitment and exceptional leadership in responding to the health emergency due to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The implementation of resolution WHA75.11 has demonstrated WHO's crucial role in coordinating health responses in complex humanitarian situations and its ability to adapt and respond effectively to evolving challenges on the ground.

We strongly condemn Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war against Ukraine. Russia grossly violates international law and the principles of the UN Charter, and causes death and suffering of the Ukrainian people. We reiterate our demand to Russia to immediately cease its military actions and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

We remain deeply concerned about the continuing impact of Russia's aggression on Ukraine's health system and its people overall. The destruction of critical health and civilian infrastructure, disruption of medical supply chains, and displacement of health workers continue to pose significant challenges to healthcare delivery resulting in declining health of Ukrainians.

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

We commend WHO's efforts in maintaining and strengthening the health system in Ukraine under extremely challenging circumstances. The Organization's work in coordinating health cluster partners, facilitating medical evacuations, and ensuring the delivery of essential medical supplies and equipment has been instrumental in preserving health and care services for millions of persons affected by the unjustified war. We also appreciate the assistance given to the countries neighbouring Ukraine and hosting refugee communities.

The EU notes with appreciation WHO's comprehensive approach to addressing both immediate and long-term health needs. The EU particularly appreciates WHO's efforts in strengthening emergency medical services and trauma care capacity, supporting the rehabilitation of damaged health facilities, maintaining essential health services, including those for pregnant women and newborn children and chronic diseases and coordinating with national and international partners to ensure effective health response.

The support in maintaining routine immunization programmes, ensuring access to mental health services, and strengthening surveillance systems for infectious diseases has been crucial in preventing the deterioration of public health indicators despite the ongoing Russia's war of aggression.

We commend WHO's detailed documentation and verification of attacks on health and care facilities and personnel. This critical work not only raises awareness about violations of International Humanitarian Law but also helps in developing more effective strategies to protect health and care workers and facilities in conflicts.

The European Union reaffirms its unwavering support for WHO's work in Ukraine and calls for: (1) sustained international support to ensure adequate funding for WHO's emergency operations in Ukraine, (2) enhanced protection for health and care facilities and workers, (3) improved access to affected persons for humanitarian health assistance, (4) strengthened coordination mechanisms among international partners, and (5) continued support for building resilient health systems.

The EU and its Member States remain committed to supporting WHO's efforts in Ukraine through financial contributions, technical expertise, and diplomatic support. We stand ready to work with WHO and other partners to ensure the effective implementation of Resolution WHA75.11 and to support the Ukrainians in meeting their health needs.

We would like to request the Secretariat to prepare an updated implementation report on resolution WHA75.11 for the forthcoming WHA78, as well as a Member State briefing.

In 2025 and beyond, the EU and its Member States continue to support Ukraine and its people.

Thank you, Chair.