



# **European Union**

## **Statement**

**WHO**

**158<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board**

**(2-7 February 2026)**

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**Item 16 – WHO’s work in health emergencies**

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**Geneva, XX February 2026**

# **WHO**

## **158<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board**

### **Item 16: WHO's work in health emergencies**

#### **EU Statement**

Chair,

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

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova\* and Georgia as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States remain very concerned by the multitude of acute and protracted health emergencies across the world and by the immense humanitarian health needs globally. We deplore the high number of verified and deliberate attacks on healthcare and condemn all such attacks in the strongest terms. They are a clear violation of international humanitarian law.

We commend WHO and its staff for their tireless efforts to save lives in extreme conditions. WHO's role in managing health emergencies remains essential, despite the resource constraints, including reductions in the volume of official development assistance. It is in our common interest to ensure that the Organization has the financial and human resources it needs to fulfil its priority tasks. Flexible and predictable emergency funding, including contingency funds, is crucial in this regard. To make sure that scarce resources are used optimally, it is also imperative that actors both within the global health architecture and in the Humanitarian Health Cluster jointly assess their roles in health emergency assistance.

To improve countries' long-term preparedness, we underscore the importance of prevention, resilient health systems, laboratory capacities and surveillance. Investing in primary healthcare, health workforce, public health infrastructure, community resilience and inclusive, locally led approaches is central to this work. Intersectoral cooperation is needed to tackle the threat of new epidemics and pandemics, in line with the One Health approach, and taking into account the health impacts of climate change. Surveillance and information sharing at local, regional and global levels is critical to preventing the escalation of the spread of disease and to saving lives. This is a shared effort. We acknowledge the important work of the WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence in this area.

The EU remains committed to finalising the ongoing negotiations on the PABS Annex. We hope that the constructive spirit that enabled the adoption of the Pandemic Agreement last year will also guide us towards a fair, implementable and impactful PABS system.

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

To conclude, the EU and its Member States reiterate their strong support to WHO in fulfilling its mandate to strengthen emergency prevention, preparedness and response globally, and to protect the health, wellbeing and dignity of all people.

Thank you.