

**Statement of the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations office and
other international organizations, H.E. Victor Dolidze**

73rd World Health Assembly

Item 6

19 May 2020

Honorable President, Honorable Director General, Distinguished Delegates,

Georgia thanks the WHO secretariat for proposing an agreed list of candidates reflecting nominations received from the regional committees.

Considering the importance of the uninterrupted and due functioning of the WHO and its Executive Body in setting global health agenda, including the need for taking decisions on resolutions to be adopted by the world health assembly, Georgia made a decision not to go against the consensus on the list of candidates proposed to be elected in the WHO Executive Board. Nevertheless, Georgia decided to disassociate itself from the consensus on the candidature of the Russian Federation, due to the following reasons.

Regrettably, when the entire world is trying to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, and against the call of the UN Secretary General for an immediate global ceasefire in the world's conflict zones, Russia continues to violate norms and principles of the international law and territorial integrity of Georgia. Just recently, on 17th of April, representatives of the Russian occupation regime in Tskhinvali continued illegal installation of the so co-called "border" signs at the Russian occupation line. Moreover, few days ago, on 16th of May the Russian occupying forces have resumed "borderisation" activities on the territory, near the Russian-occupied region of Abkhazia.

Given that Russia further continues the above-mentioned process of the so-called "borderisation" and the so-called "crossing points" with the Russia-occupied regions of Georgia are closed, people living in the conflict-affected areas are left isolated and deprived of the possibility to get elementary medical services, not to mention the need to tackle with the new challenges they face amidst the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

The Russian Federation, as the occupying power exercising effective control over the two occupied regions of Georgia - Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions - prevents the Georgian Government from ensuring an access to health and humanitarian services for the citizens

living in the occupied territories, which due to the spread of the COVID-19 are in extraordinary need of assistance.

This being said, we appeal to the WHO to give a due assessment of the above-mentioned dire humanitarian situation and undertake effective measures to continue assisting us in providing medical and humanitarian aid to the people of the Georgian regions affected by the Russian occupation.

Georgia requests to include this statement into the 73rd WHA official records.