Mr President,

Mr Director General,

Dear Colleagues,

My country has been dramatically affected by the coronavirus. Our population is 34,000 inhabitants in 61 square km.

When we registered the first case at the end of February, our only hospital had no isolation wards and only had 6 intensive care units.

In a few days, we extended intensive care from 6 to 20 beds and created an isolation department capable of hosting up to 80 people.

On April 7, we began serological screening on the entire population, starting with the health workers and the police forces involved in the operations, then moving on to the families of infected people, and finally we started screening workers.

Today, only 6 covid patients remain in the hospital, the rest of the patients are followed by a team of doctors and nurses in the territory.

To date, our country has carried out almost 4,000 molecular swabs and more than 7,000 serological tests on its population (and on cross-border workers from neighbouring Italy). The contagion in the family circles of those who have been sick is 15-20%, while in the rest of the population we register much lower percentages, close to 1%.

We are confident that the epidemiological investigations and the tests, which we intend to do on the entire population, will be of great help in understanding the phenomenon we are facing.

This health crisis immediately turned into an economic crisis. The inability to have access to European funding exposes us to an unprecedented crisis.

We therefore hope that channels of solidarity can be opened as soon as possible, including by the WHO, within which our country has largely contributed over the years in the coordination as co-leader of small countries.

I would like to address my heartfelt thanks for his support most of all to Hans Henry P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director.

Minister of Health and Social Security

Roberto Ciavatta

13/05/2020