Statement of the Republic of Slovenia

73rd World Health Assembly (18-19 May 2020 Geneva, Switzerland)

Agenda Item 3: Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General

Distinguish President, Director General, dear delegates.

Slovenia would like to align itself with the Statement of the EU and its Member States.

Response to the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that Slovenia has a strong public health system with well-coordinated primary health care and public health program for emergency preparedness and response. Efficiently organised Civil protection with strong and dedicated health workforce, including laboratories, helped mitigate the health impacts of the pandemic.

WHO external evaluation of the International Health Regulations Core Capacities, performed in Slovenia in 2017, contributed to improved national emergency preparedness and multisectoral approach. Consequently, we perceive such evaluations as an important contribution to the implementation of the IHR.

We have all experienced many uncertainties in responding to COVID-19. Slovenia appreciates the efforts of WHO in coordinating global response and is stressing the need for an appropriate evaluation that will contribute to better preparedness in the future.

It has become evident, that ensuring adequate and equitable access of essential medicines, medical equipment, personal protection equipment and supplies is crucial. Transparent and inclusive international policies towards the development, manufacturing and distribution of vaccines and medicines are needed for efficiently responding to the pandemics, such as COVID-19. Providing access to new affordable vaccines, medicinal products, diagnostics and treatments in the spirit of global solidarity for all, is necessary for our common success.

To conclude, COVID-19 pandemic is a huge test for our health systems and societies. We strongly believe that cooperation and concrete action in accelerating implementation of already agreed international commitments is vital for ensuring preparedness and appropriate response in safeguarding health of our populations now and in the future.

Thank you.