Honourable President of the Assembly,

Distinguished Director-General,

Excellencies, Colleagues,

Ukraine has already informed the Secretariat of the World Health Organization on its position regarding the candidature of the Russian Federation to the Executive Board of the WHO.

At the same time, recognizing the importance of the effective, coherent and uninterrupted functioning of the WHO and its Executive Board under these unique circumstances, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Ukraine, after consultations with our partners and the WHO Secretariat, has decided not to block consensus on the list of candidates to the WHO Executive Board.

Nevertheless, Ukraine dissociates itself from the consensus on the candidature of the Russian Federation. This position is well-grounded and based on a number of reasons.

First. The Russian Federation has been constantly violating norms and principles of international law with regard to sovereignty, inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of Ukraine, including by ignoring the demands of United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/262 “Territorial integrity of Ukraine”, resolutions 71/205, 72/190, 73/263 and 74/168 “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine”, and 73/194, 74/17 “Problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov”.

Second. The Russian aggression against Ukraine, for six years in a row, has led to a significant degradation of the healthcare system in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, while civilian objects and infrastructure continue to be endangered there.

Third. The Russian occupation administrations in Crimea and Donbas conceal the data about the situation with the coronavirus spread and manipulate their statistics on identified COVID-19 cases, thus violating its obligation to ensure sufficient hygiene and public health standards, as well as the provision of medical care to the population under occupation.
**Fourth.** Russia’s violations of international law and its obligations as the occupying Power make it impossible for Ukraine to provide medical assistance directly to the population of the temporarily occupied areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Aid from the international community has also been significantly impeded due to continued violations of the ceasefire regime by the Russian occupying forces, as well as the actual closure of access by the occupation administrations for the SMM OSCE, the UN agencies, and other international humanitarian organizations.

**Fifth.** Especially disturbing is that the ICRC is not allowed to freely carry out its humanitarian activities in the occupied territories, in particular to have unhindered access to all protected persons.

**Sixth.** Russia’s use of indiscriminate weapons, including planting of anti-personnel mines in the occupied territories of Ukraine, poses a long-term threat to the health of civilians.

**Last, but not least.** Apart from humiliating ill treatment, Russia deliberately ignores complaints about the poor health conditions of the Ukrainian hostages, illegally detained by it on trumped-up charges, even when their symptoms are similar to COVID-19.

I hope that the WHO Member-States and its Secretariat will duly take these points into account, while considering the situations that require our Organization’s special attention.

I request to include this statement into the 73rd WHA official records.

**I thank you, Madame President.**