

Republic of Austria

Statement

WHO

74th World Health Assembly

(24 May – 1June 2021)

_____

Item 3:

Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
Director General

General Debate (Plenary)

_____

25 May 2021

WHO

74th World Health Assembly

(24 May – 1June 2021)

Item 3: Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, General Debate (Plenary)

Statement of Austria

Chair,

Director General,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Austria fully aligns itself with the Statement of the European Union delivered by Portugal.

Dear colleagues,

“In the hindsight, everyone’s a prophet!” once said one of our most popular Austrian poets.

This is doubtlessly also true for this crisis, where we have been very happy to see such an **experienced and prudent WHO leadership** team steering our ship through the stormy sea.

Only together we can overcome the pandemic. In this spirit, Austria has participated from the beginning in COVAX as a part of Team Europa and made considerable financial contributions to COVAX, CEPI, ACT-A and other institutions, while also coordinating the **"EU Vaccine Sharing Mechanism** for six Western Balkan countries.

Austria is committed to multilateralism with a human rights approach and hence also to strengthening the WHO as the world's leading international organization on global health issues.

To reach this goal, we deem the ongoing work of the **Working Group on Sustainable Financing** of vital importance and an indispensable step towards a more independent and fit for purpose WHO.

Further main areas of Austria's engagement in global health matters are **primary health care**, **eye care**, **health literacy**, **strengthening of health systems** including **digital health** and – recalling the broad definition that "**health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" –** our commitment to delivering on the **SDGs** through intensified efforts throughout the UN system **- leaving no-one behind**.

Coming to the end, I would like to express our **sincere gratitude and highest recognition to all health workers**, in particular to all those **heroes at the front line**, as well as to the **scientists and researchers** who made Covid-19 vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics available in record time, and last but not least of course also to **each and every colleague at WHO, its management team and its Director General**, who all have been doing an incredibly great job in these tough times.

Thank you.

_____

(330 words)