REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

74th World Health Assembly
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Pillar	**2**	**ONE BILLION MORE PEOPLE PROTECTED FROM HEALTH EMERGENCIES**
Agenda	**17.2**	Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee (IOAC) for the WHO Health Emergencies Programme
	17.4	Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)

Thank you, Chair.

The Philippines recognizes the evolving nature of the scientific evidence being translated into policy, and that uncertainty is both a given and a risk that we all need to mitigate. We underline the urgent need to strengthen interdisciplinary and international cooperation for emergency preparedness and response in the face of these obstacles.

This report by the IOAC is a valuable step forward to achieve the goals of improved emergency risk reduction and response. We call on the WHO to contextualize the report's recommendations in the experiences and needs of the Global South to make this report meaningful. Pandemic-proofing supply chains especially for low- and middle-income countries, providing appropriate digital solutions to countries with poor IT infrastructure, and ensuring that technical advice provided by Country Offices is followed through with actionable ways forward are but a few concrete steps that we can take to ensure that no-one is left behind.

So that the implementation of our commitments to the International Health Regulations also strengthens countries' surveillance systems, the Philippines calls on the WHO and all National Focal Points to craft guidelines and platforms that will make information sharing among Member States' easier. We call on the WHO to take further steps in empowering NFPs to develop and implement national action plans built on recent learnings and more responsive to future public health emergencies. Further, we call on the WHO to facilitate response to requests for information aligned with national data privacy laws and to strengthen case detection and contact tracing between borders.

The integration of mental health in preparedness and response also calls for a re-examination of many of our assumptions in the provision of mental health services. The provision of these services should be community-centered and multidisciplinary, and vulnerable populations such as frontliners, women, and the underserved should be prioritized and protected.

To end, the Philippines fully supports the endorsement of the updated comprehensive global mental health action plan 2013-2030 and calls on Member States to implement this plan soon.

Thank you.