Portugal

World Health Organization

74th World Health Assembly

(24 May – 1 June 2021)

13.3 Expanding access to effective treatments for cancer and rare and orphan diseases, including medicines, vaccines, medical devices, diagnostics, assistive products, cell- and gene-based therapies and other health technologies; and improving the transparency of markets for medicines, vaccines, and other health products

Chair,

Excellences,

I have the honour to address the 74th World Health Assembly on behalf of Portugal. We align ourselves with the previous statement made by the European Union.

Portugal recognizes that Universal Health Coverage can only be achieved when there is affordable and equitable access to safe, effective and quality medicines and health products.

In addition, we acknowledge the range of barriers, including rising prices for new medicines, shortages of essential medicines, as well as the problem of substandard and falsified medical products entering the global supply and distribution chain.

In this context, we highlight three points:

Firstly, Portugal congratulates WHO for its leading role in providing strategies for measuring, monitoring and managing medicine prices that fit national contexts and healthcare systems, including creating evidence-based policies and promoting global and regional oversight.

Secondly, Portugal recognizes that access to affordable medicines and other health products depends on improving market transparency throughout the supply and distribution chain and acknowledge the work done by WHO, recalling the Fair Pricing Forum as a hallmark to promote discussions and change in these topics.

Lastly, Portugal calls for more collaborative work to shape research, innovation, and development to promote affordable and equitable solutions to access essential medicines and other health products and increasing the mobilization of resources and regulatory capacity to ensure transparency of prices and costs.

Chair,

We can only achieve health for everyone, everywhere, when commitments and global public goods are accessible in an equitable way to ensure both universal health coverage and that no one is left behind.

And this requires solidarity, cooperation, and collaboration from all actors.

Thank you.

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