Portugal

World Health Organization

74th Session of the World Health Assembly

(24 May – 2 June 2021)

17.1. COVID-19 response

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.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic we would like to congratulate the leading role of WHO and underscore the importance of preparedness, response and recovery capacities to health emergencies, as well as the ever-present need to build resilient health systems.

Although we acknowledge gaps, which were previously clear, on the implementation of the International Health Regulations, we acknowledge Member States for their commitment to multilateral cooperation and international solidarity in supporting countries and the work conducted by the WHO. As such, we highlight the importance of the Universal Health and Preparedness Review, a mechanism with the potential to successfully share policies, technical expertise and best practices across Member States and Regions, supporting Member States in their individual struggles to scale up preparedness investment and improvement.

These core capacities should be considered a global public good – especially considering the health, economic and social disruptions to countries and populations triggered by health emergencies.

Chair,

We deem timely and necessary to evaluate the experiences lived throughout the first year of pandemic, to make sure Health Systems as a whole come out more resilient.

We acknowledge the importance of considering these lessons and call on all Member States to strive for global equitable cooperation and solidarity in accessing the right tools to fight this pandemic everywhere – as this is our only way to a strong recovery.

We are committed to global health security, through transparent, reliable, and timely communication, in line with the guidance of WHO, assuring global citizens their health and human rights.

Thank you.

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