

Portugal
World Health Organization
75th Session of the World Health Assembly
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16.3 WHO's work in health emergencies

Chair,

Excellences,

I have the honour to address the 75th World Health Assembly on behalf of Portugal. We align with the previous statement made by the European Union.

Our hearts are with the people of Ukraine, suffering from an humanitarian and health emergency created by Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression.

As the past 2 years have shown, health emergencies not only appear unexpectedly but also force upon us major challenges. This pandemic, as few health issues before, has dominated the global public health agenda and the global economy. Its political implications can be seen everywhere, as well as the impact in life and livelihood of the world population at most diverse levels. The onset of effective vaccines has therefore been a game changer, allowing the mitigation of economic, social and health consequences.

Portugal considers that universal access to quality and affordable medical products is a fundamental element for the realization of Human Rights, namely the right to health and of universal health coverage. We would like to commend WHO's initiative ACT Accelerator as a good practice and underline our strong commitment to vaccine solidarity.

Portugal is doing its share. We worked with several countries in the international effort to fight COVID-19, including through the donation of vaccines and other necessary medical supplies. To date, we've delivered more than 6,8 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to lusophone and other countries, 17 in total, in all continents. In some countries, we're the biggest donor of vaccines, guaranteeing deliver and transportation.

Considering only the African Portuguese Speaking Countries, Portugal's donations helped these countries to have a higher vaccinations coverage against COVID-19 than its region average.

Chair,

The right to health transcends borders, and ought to be upheld in emergencies, situations of instability and humanitarian crises.

Health emergencies widen inequalities and exacerbate social and economic inequities. Vulnerable communities, including refugees and migrants, are amongst the worst affected including by the impact on access to health services and livelihoods.

Good health, access to quality health services and continuity of care through all stages of migration, during and beyond health emergencies, is crucial for safe, orderly, and regular migration.

Portugal has designed policies and enacted legislation making the promotion of migrant and refugee's health one of its priorities, guided by an inclusive, non-discriminatory, holistic approach. Furthermore, Portugal is a proud supporter the WHO's Global Health and Migration Programme.

We are committed with the ambition of making health systems more resilient believing in the power of cooperation and the inclusion of the most vulnerable.

Thank you.

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