



Statement by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) at the

77th World Health Assembly, 27-31 May, 2024

Agenda Item 13.2 – Implementation of the International Health Regulations

Thank you, Chair.

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) welcomes the report of the Director General and commends the World Health Organization for its work in supporting Member States to build their public health capacities in implementing the IHR.

Legal preparedness – or simply put, the capacity of using the law across sectors to prevent, detect and respond to public health emergencies – is a critical capacity of an effective response to public health emergencies. It is embedded in the indicators of the Joint External Evaluation, which calls for effective legal instruments to implement the IHR and comply with international obligations. Nonetheless, the importance of legal preparedness remains understated, and its work underfunded.

Building legal capacities to address public health emergencies is a critical strategy to further national and global health security and strengthen the implementation of global health instruments, including the IHR. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, IDLO has worked with international and national partners, including the WHO IHR Secretariat, to support countries to enhance legal preparedness. As co-lead of the capacity building working group under the Global Health Security Agenda and its Legal Preparedness Action Package, IDLO is working with leading experts and academics to develop training resources and deliver tailor-made support for low and middle-income countries.

As the new global health system evolves, IDLO calls on Member States to invest in legal preparedness as part of their efforts to better prepare for the next public health crisis in compliance with their international obligations and standards. We remain committed to support countries in this endeavour, in collaboration with WHO and other partners.

Thank you.