

Committee A  
Agenda item 14.1

A77/8, A77/8 Add.1 and EB154/14

Statement of I.R. Iran on:  
"Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)"

Mr./Madam Chairperson, Ladies and gentlemen,

We appreciate the secretariat for preparing the documents A77/8, A77/8 Add.1 and EB154/14 and reflecting the challenges and developments, including in paragraphs 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, the diverse and valuable WHO supports to strengthen IHR capacities in the different regions of the world.

We have taken note of the question raised at the end of the document that is ***"How can WHO member countries strengthen the implementation of IHR capacities?"***

To find possible solutions in response to this key question, we would like to benefit two examples based on our national best practices:

**First example)** Integrated disease surveillance systems (IDS) are among the fundamental capacities of the IHR (document EB154/14 penultimate question of the secretariat of the WHE program from countries). However, WHO neglected the I.R. Iran's experience on the Triple-S project. The initiative program concluded in 2016 after a 5-year study with WHO support and later its transnational potentials confirmed in international evaluations. Despite its name, the syndromic surveillance system (Triple S or SSS) is actually a comprehensive system based on four packages including rapid warning modules, case-based epidemiological surveillance system, laboratory surveillance system and automated reports.. In a pilot study. The SSS was found to have issued warning signals for acute maculopapular rash a day and a half earlier than the traditional urgent telephone reporting of suspected measles cases. Until its development, this system was able to integrate about 40 acute respiratory infectious diseases and diseases transmitted through water and food, and if fully implemented, it can integrate about 170 epidemic-prone diseases. The addition of COVID-19 under acute respiratory syndromes alongside previous acute diseases such as influenza was an example of its flexibility in responding to a pandemic as a new epidemiological situation.

Then we shared it with the international community in authoritative scientific sources and a forum<sup>1,2 3</sup>,

We suggest that the Triple-S experience to receive more attention by WHO as one of the potential key solutions to strengthen some key challenges of the surveillance systems highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In line with the Triple-S philosophy, in 2023, Iran launched an integrated surveillance system for 21 respiratory pathogens with the help of multiplex laboratory tests in 2 provinces of the country.

**Second example)** to strengthen EBS systems, in 2023, in an international competition process, Iran succeeded in entering the EIOS scientific research fellowship, established by the WHO's Berlin Hub for pandemic & epidemic intelligence. WHO has created the hub with a huge investment of nearly 100 million €.

Despite passing all difficult steps to meet the scientific qualifications for the course, after the admission, GOARN and the Hub removed Iran, by raising political reasons. That action was in contrary to recommendations made by IHR review committee in response to COVID-19<sup>4</sup>, and in opposition to the spirit of IHR incorporated in Article 44 of (i.e. cooperation and assistance) as well as the recent amendments to it. Otherwise, some countries cannot be better prepared to deal with future health emergencies/or pandemics.

In order to strengthen IHR, it is critical that WHO carefully examine and not to be affected by the political obstacles for cooperation between countries. That way, all member states are equitably included in building capacities. This recommendation is commensurate with WHO motto in WHA77 i.e. "Health for All and All for Health".

**Madam/Mr. chair, thank you for the floor.**

**Dept. of Surveillance, Iranian CDC**

**Deputy for Public Health**

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1 - Developing and pilot testing an early warning system for epidemic-prone events based on syndromic surveillance system (SSS) in Iran: initial results. In: Program and Abstracts Book. International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (Atlanta, GA; 2018: USCDC), p. 93–4. Available online at: <https://www.cdc.gov/iceid/2018/index.html> (accessed September 19, 2023).

2 - **Health systems recovery in the context of COVID-19 and protracted conflict; ISBN 978-2-8325-2818-1: DOI 10.3389/978-2-8325-2818-1.**

3 - **Front. Public Health 11:1073259. Doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2023.1073259**

4- *"We must realize that, unless this report leads to change and greater international collaboration, we shall be no better protected from the next pandemic than we were from this one".*

