

**78th World Health Assembly
Plenary
General discussion**

21 May 2025

**Remarks by
H.E. Ivars Pundurs
Latvian Ambassador to the UN in Geneva**

Honorable President, Distinguished Delegates,

Latvia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. We thank the Director General for his report and presentation.

Most of the speakers – if not all – have spoken about the challenging times this Organization is facing. We would like to emphasize the key word here - “challenges”. Because with challenges come opportunities. This crisis is an opportunity for the Organization and for its leadership - to prove that it is ready to adapt, to effectively rearrange and reprioritize, to ensure sustainable financing, and in the end come out stronger than before.

Latvia confirms its continuous and unwavering support to the Organization. While certain financing streams might stop, this does not mean the end of health-related problems in the world. On the contrary, the Organization’s mandate and the indispensable support it provides globally remain more pertinent than ever - including with regards to the ever-growing incidence of health emergencies - threat of AMR, climate change, NCDs, mental health, and many more.

Mr. President,

Latvia expresses steadfast support to Ukraine and its people and condemns Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. We call for a continuous involvement of WHO, within its mandate, and in accordance with Resolution WHA 75.11.

Latvia welcomes the successful work on the Pandemic Agreement. This is an important signal that the Organization and its Member States send in times when the very concept of multilateralism is being increasingly attacked.

Finally, Mr. President,

Keeping in mind the “headline” of this year’s Assembly – One World for Health - Latvia would like to reiterate its call for inclusiveness at this Organization.

I thank you!