



European Union
Statement

WHO

79th World Health Assembly

(18 May – 23 May 2026)

**Item 13.3 – Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the WHO
Pandemic Agreement**

Geneva, 18 May 2026

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EU Statement

Chair,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

We remain committed to finalising the PABS Annex negotiations, once the outstanding issues have been solved.

Despite our collective efforts, a number of issues require significant further discussions. We commend, and are grateful for, the efforts of the Bureau, the Secretariat, and the WHO Member States.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic may no longer dominate the international community's attention, and its memory may be fading, the importance of pandemic prevention, preparedness and response remains unchanged. The Pandemic Agreement, adopted a year ago, contains important provisions that need to be translated into concrete action, while respecting the responsibilities of the future Parties for the definition of their health policies.

Consequently, it is important that last year's adoption is followed up by completing the PABS Annex, so that the Pandemic Agreement may enter into force in a timely manner.

The EU and its Member States remain committed to developing an effective, equitable and implementable PABS System that will make a real difference on the ground and that, together with the implementation of the Pandemic Agreement, will contribute to improving pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and global health security.

We will continue our important work and aim to finalise the negotiations by the next WHA, which will, in turn, enable the opening of the Pandemic Agreement for signature and ratification.

We expect that the Pandemic Agreement, once implemented, will significantly enhance global prevention, preparedness and response and provide for a more resilient and responsive global health architecture for the benefit of the entire international community.