



Republic of the Gambia
Ministry of Health
The Quadrangle
Banjul

SEVENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER, GENEVA 2026

Agenda Item:	WHO's Work in Health Emergencies
Documents	Document A79/9
Requested action	Note the report
Time limit:	3 Minutes
Commission	A

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

The Gambia thanks the Director-General for the comprehensive report on WHO's work in health emergencies and commends the Organization's continued leadership in responding to acute and protracted crises worldwide.

We note that between January and October 2025, WHO responded to 43 graded emergencies across 74 countries, including 20 Grade 3 emergencies managed under the Emergency Response Framework and supported by the Incident Management System. These mechanisms have been critical in ensuring timely, coordinated, and effective support to Member States facing complex humanitarian and public health challenges.

The report highlights the growing impacts of climate change, conflict, and funding shortfalls on health systems and vulnerable populations. We are deeply concerned by the scale of service disruptions, attacks on health care, and the widening financing gap for emergency operations. These challenges underscore the urgent need for predictable, flexible, and sustainable financing, as well as equitable access to life-saving tools, including vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics.

We also acknowledge WHO's critical role under the International Health Regulations (2005), particularly its continuous surveillance, triage, verification, and risk assessment of thousands of signals to detect potential public health emergencies of international concern. These efforts are essential in an increasingly complex global risk landscape characterized by overlapping outbreaks, climate shocks, and conflict-related emergencies.

For The Gambia, health emergency preparedness and response remain national priorities. As a country vulnerable to climate-related shocks, disease outbreaks, and cross-border health threats, we have intensified efforts to strengthen prevention, detection, preparedness, and response capacities. Progress has been made in reinforcing Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR), enhancing epidemic intelligence, strengthening public health emergency management through incident management systems, and improving multisectoral coordination.

The Gambia values WHO's continued support and calls for sustained global solidarity to ensure predictable financing and equitable access to emergency response tools. We remain committed to working with WHO and partners to build resilient health systems and protect our populations from current and future health emergencies.

We urge the Assembly to take note of the report.

Thank you.