



Republic of The Gambia
Ministry of Health
The Quadrangle
Banjul

SEVENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER, GENEVA 18-23 MAY 2026

Agenda Item:	Strengthening laboratory Biological Risk Management
Documents	Document A79/10 and (resolution WHA77.7 (2024))
Requested action	Note the reports and acknowledge the steps agreed on the global actions
Time limit	3 minutes

The Gambia thanks the Secretariat for the report on **Strengthening Laboratory Biological Risk Management** (To be review in regional statement assigned to Gambia)

Laboratory biological risk management is a vital component of our national health system, ensuring the safety of laboratory personnel, patients, the public, and the environment, while supporting accurate and reliable diagnostic services. Guided by the National Health Laboratory Services framework and the National Laboratory Policy, biosafety and biosecurity are integrated within laboratory quality management systems across the country.

The Government of The Gambia is committed to establishing a comprehensive laboratory biorisk management system. Key achievements include the development of national biosafety manuals and guidelines, investment in waste management infrastructure through the procurement of incinerators across all regions, and capacity-building initiatives. Five laboratory scientists have completed IFBA certification in biorisk management, aligned with international and ISO-based standards. We are also strengthening infrastructure, supply chains, and human resource capacity, including the designation of laboratory safety officers and regular supervision and audits.

Despite this progress, challenges remain, including infrastructure gaps, limited monitoring and supervision, constraints in waste transportation, shortages of spare parts, and insufficient training in some facilities. These gaps heighten the risk of laboratory-acquired infections and environmental contamination.

To address these challenges, all laboratories are strengthening incident reporting systems, promoting a culture of biosafety and biosecurity, and continuously improving practices through training, monitoring, and quality improvement initiatives.

Effective laboratory biological risk management is essential to health worker protection, diagnostic quality, and national preparedness for public health emergencies, in line with the International Health Regulations.

Thank you.