



WHA79 – Israel Statement

Item 17.1

Thank you, Chair.

It is high time that this Assembly reevaluates this long-standing agenda item, the recent additional item, and their duplicity.

In a time when efficiency should be prioritized - these agenda items drain precious resources while doing **nothing** for the improvement of health. For this reason, we will not take the floor a second time.

The Assembly continues to entertain the issue of health conditions in the Golan Heights, where healthcare is better than most places represented in these halls.

Let us not be mistaken. If these discussions were actually about health, they would focus on cooperation; and address all relevant actors.

Instead, the reports produced by WHO and decisions adopted here, deliberately omit the real cause for harm against health facilities - the systematic abuse of health facilities by armed groups.

For decades Hamas has systematically embedded military infrastructure in and beneath hospitals in Gaza, including tunnels, fortified underground spaces, communications infrastructure, and use of hospital grounds for military coordination.

The World Health Assembly should be the first to condemn this abhorrent and thoroughly-documented phenomenon. Instead, silence.

WHO has been invited repeatedly to view firsthand the grave abuse of medical facilities by armed groups in Gaza, including command centers, weapons depots, and terrorist hide-outs. The Organization refused. When intelligence was brought to the WHO management, they refused to [quote] “process the information”.

Israel does not claim that it is above scrutiny. The question that we are calling upon Member States to ask themselves is whether the World **Health** Organization, should be dedicating resources to advance distorted narratives and to satiate political appetites - at the expense of professional discussions on health issues.

Excellency, I will speak frankly. We've all seen the coercive and intimidating behavior that some States demonstrated here this week, and every time this Assembly gathers. Attempts to hold productive and professional discussions are thwarted. Israel is glad to raise its voice against such behavior. The politicization of health does not serve the public.

Israel therefore opposes this draft decision and calls for a vote.