



Ministry of Health
Republic of Latvia

79th World Health Assembly

Plenary

General discussion

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Remarks by

H.E. Hosams Abu Meri

Minister of Health of the Republic of Latvia

Dear Director-General,

Latvia aligns with the statement of the **European Union**, and thanks you for your report and presentation, and for your leadership of this Organization.

Excellencies, first and foremost,

I reaffirm Latvia's full **support for Ukraine's** independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. Latvia condemns all attacks on **health care facilities** and **personnel** and the **grave humanitarian impact** of Russia's ongoing strikes against Ukraine's infrastructure. I welcome and encourage **WHO's efforts** in strengthening the health system in Ukraine under extremely dangerous circumstances.

Second,

This Organization – and multilateralism itself – is **under attack**. There is a certain amount of **doubt** regarding the benefits of coordinating health issues at the global level. It is very important that we – members of the **science-based healthcare community** - remain **highly committed to the core mandate** of the Organization and its leadership.

I know that my country's region – the EURO region – has already made some painful but **effective cutbacks**. I sincerely appreciate **Dr Kluge's leadership** in this regard. Latvia itself is operating under tight budget conditions, but I am proud to note we are doing our best to maintain a **high level of healthcare protection for our citizens**, for example, by actively implementing **digital solutions** and by executing a **hospital governance reform**.

Third,

Latvia remains fully committed to the finalization of the **PABS Annex of the Pandemic Agreement**. The recent outbreak of the **Hantavirus** is just another example that proves – we need to render the **WHO's leadership more tools** to coordinate our common efforts to ensure **health security**.

Finally,

Latvia would like to reiterate its repeated call for **inclusiveness** at this Organization.

Thank you!