

SEVENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

GENEVA, 18 - 23 MAY 2026

Agenda item 3

Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General

Statement by Portugal

Chair,
Director-General,
Excellencies,

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Portugal welcomes the theme “Reshaping Global Health: A Shared Responsibility”. In a fragmented world, global health depends on solidarity, effective multilateral cooperation and shared accountability.

We support a more agile, transparent and financially sustainable WHO, focused on its core mandate and able to deliver impact where needs are greatest. Predictable and flexible financing, sound governance and alignment between priorities, resources and results remain essential.

Portugal reaffirms universal health coverage as a cornerstone of equity, inclusion and social cohesion. Strong primary healthcare is fundamental to that goal. In Portugal, Local Health Units strengthen integration between primary, hospital and community care, improve continuity and bring services closer to citizens.

Mental health remains a national and global priority. Portugal supports rights-based, community-oriented and person-

centred approaches, especially for children, adolescents and people in situations of vulnerability.

We welcome progress towards stronger pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, including through the Pandemic Agreement, and underline the importance of solidarity, information sharing and equitable access to medical countermeasures.

Digital health and artificial intelligence can improve quality, access and efficiency, but must remain ethical, inclusive, human-centred and grounded in fundamental rights.

Portugal also highlights its commitment to cooperation with Portuguese-speaking countries, as a bridge for knowledge exchange, capacity-building and innovation across regions.

Our shared responsibility is to strengthen trust in multilateralism and ensure that no country and no person is left behind.

Thank you.

[246 words]