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**World Health Organization**  
**148<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board, 18–26 January 2021**

**Item 4 - Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment**

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Thank you chair,

Israel would like to thank the United Kingdom, Canada & the Netherlands for leading this critical discussion and taking the initiative to bring about a resolution devoted to preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

We are pleased to co-sponsor this resolution and to stand along with many others in sending a clear message, that WHO, as well as all other international organizations, must share a zero tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment. This resolution commendably raises awareness about the issue, but it is not just a slogan- it contains action-oriented solutions to address it.

This is a call to take responsibility by allocating the necessary resources, ensuring all staff uphold to the highest standard and demand to do so in transparency, fairness and inclusion.

We already know that sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment has negative physical and mental health consequences for the survivors, and that world-wide a large number of, mostly, women report being sexually exploited, abused or harassed. We also know that due to underreporting actual numbers may be even greater. Unfortunately, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment happens everywhere, but it thrives when not properly addressed.

This is an opportunity for WHO to further enhance its work, and lead by example in the UN family. In this regard, we support decisive actions on preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in operations, and facilitating effective action after sexual abuse or harassment has occurred by holding perpetrators to account and providing support and protection for survivors;

Thank you.