
World Health Organization
EB 150 – January 2022

Item 3: Outcome of the Second special session of the World Health Assembly, held to consider developing a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response

Thank you Chair, Colleagues,

We should not expect that the Omicron variant would be the last variant of concern.

The COVID-19 crisis serves as a strong reminder that resilient health systems are the backbone of our societies and economies and that close collaboration is imperative in assuring health for all.

We must continue to support medical staff who have been on the front lines of the pandemic since the beginning. In support of their work, we must learn from this pandemic, and better prepare for future threats. It is clear that the global system was not ready to deal with a pandemic, and that existing international tools are not strong enough to prevent future pandemics. Rather, there is a need for a more coordinated response between institutions, countries and international organizations.

We see the World Health Organization as the main body to lead this move and believe that formulating a new international tool, focusing on pandemic prevention is a necessary step. The new tool should improve global performance in prevention and preparedness, as well as include a response mechanism for a future epidemic outbreak.

At the same time the WHO must maintain its unique position as a leader of public health worldwide. To this end – it must retain appropriate budgetary means which is a concern for all of us – but it must also create a more efficient and relevant system requiring a fresh outlook, courage, and professionalism including preventing conflicts of interest and politicization.

In the spirit of protecting human lives and “leaving no one behind”, we reiterate Israel’s commitment to join with the WHO and the international community in order to effectively address the current global challenge and the ones to come.

Thank you.