
**World Health Organization
WHA 71 – 23 May 2018**

**Committee A
Health Emergency Situation**

Thank you Chair,

Thank you to the Secretariat for preparing the relevant documents for this meeting, in particular the draft five-year global strategic plan to improve public health preparedness response, 2018–2023, contained in document A71/8. The Health Emergencies Program is a main pillar of WHO's work. With time, countries have come to expect the WHO to lead us in the global response to health emergencies of all kinds – from earthquakes to epidemics. We commend the WHO and the Health Emergencies Program team for their tireless efforts in reforming the program so as to guarantee it truly makes the lives of millions safer. We likewise appreciate the importance given to the program by the Director General, and the various briefings given to Member States on its work throughout the year.

We note with satisfaction the expressed need for a unified, coherent framework for countries to prepare for different types of emergencies before they happen. Preparedness must be properly monitored and evaluated to ensure that, when disaster does strike, fewer lives are lost. However, we feel that not enough emphasis is given to cross-country cooperation before and during emergencies, and question the assumption that national preparedness alone is enough. In addition, while we see potential value in complementing the voluntary self-assessment tool with some form of peer review and voluntary external evaluations, we feel that this needs to be developed further. Israel would like to have an active role in future discussions on this issue.

In conclusion, Israel supports the draft strategic plan presented and the draft decision contained in decision EB142(1). Health emergencies do not see borders and nations. National public health preparedness is therefore vital for saving lives not just nationally, but around the globe.

Thank you very much.