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**World Health Organization**

**WHA 76 – 23 May 2023**

**Committee A (14-15)**

**WHO’s work in health emergencies**

Mr. Nitzan ARNY

Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN in Geneva

Thank you chair,

Israel would like to restate its full support to WHO’s efforts in leading the processes to strengthen the way countries and the world prepare for, prevent, detect and respond to health emergencies. We deem it essential that national, regional and global efforts are coordinated and coherent, providing an effective framework and tools for Member states and the global community. We should ensure that the outcomes of our negotiations are feasible and appropriate to achieve their purpose- a safer future for all.

We believe that it is states’ responsibility to protect their people’s health, however, only through a joint global effort will we be able to enhance the world's capacity to face current and future spread of diseases. We consider the WHO to be the principle body in leading these efforts.

The Covid 19 pandemic, as well as other outbreaks in recent years, have highlighted the importance of international cooperation. The processes we have started together are beyond ambitious. Israel wants to avoid duplications and ensure that the INB and the IHR working group work synergistically and in coordination. Israel, together with Morocco, also coordinates the consultative process towards the high level meeting on Pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, that takes place in New York this September. We believe that this work will complement, fuel and accelerate our work here in Geneva.

We would also like to take the opportunity to call for further streamlining. The success of international mechanisms is determined by their efficacy. We note our past experience with COVAX, in which our attempts to offer millions of COVID-19 vaccines were not utilized. We must also maintain an appropriate balance between ensuring adequate provisions of emergency tools and medicines during global health crises, while also protecting the rights of providers and suppliers.

With lessons learned, we must ensure that we are strengthening the IHR and providing stronger foundations through the INB to improve preparedness, prevention and response for future pandemics and health crises.

Chair,

I would like now to address to some of the active emergencies mentioned in the DGs report A76/11, and to start by thanking the World Health Organization and its teams on the ground for their vital work conducted under extremely challenging circumstances around the world. These emergencies have affected millions. Given their scale, complexity and inherent operational challenges, they have required the highest level of Organization-wide support.

By noting the report today, member states will ensure the continuation of WHO work in providing emergency support in cases like floods, earthquakes, and conflicts and supports states to build sustainable preparedness for health emergencies and expand their capabilities.

Chair,

Israel reiterates its deepest condolences to the people of Turkiye and Syria following the devastating earthquakes earlier this year. Israel supports WHO’s response to this emergency, and through Operation Olive Branches, also responded resolutely and without delay, sending hundreds of personal and establishing a field hospital, in coordination with WHO and other Humanitarian organizations, which treated hundreds of people and saved lives.

Chair,

Israel also expresses serious concerns over the continued health emergency in Ukraine and refugee-receiving and -hosting countries, triggered by the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine.

The war continues to inflict a devastating impact on Ukraine’s health system and has severely restricted access to medicines, facilities, and health services for the Ukrainian population. It continues to be important for WHO and member states to support the Ministry of Health of Ukraine to restore disrupted services, assist displaced health workers and replace destroyed infrastructure.

Israel is working with Ukraine on a long-term medical rehabilitation program, focusing on mental health and orthopedic injuries who require prosthetics and rehabilitation. Israel has also conducted dozens of capacity building and trainings for health personnel. We will continue to do all that we can to assist the wellbeing and health of the Ukrainian people.

I thank you.