

Statement on behalf of EMR group  
INB2 meeting 18-22 July 2022  
Agenda item 3

**Identification of the provision of the Constitution of the World Health Organization under which the instrument should be adopted in line with paragraph 1(1) of decision SSA2(5) (2021)**

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Distinguished delegates, I wish to deliver this statement on behalf of members of East Mediterranean Region.

At the outset allow me Mr./ Mrs. Co-chair to express our thanks to WHO secretariat and INB bureau, for their efforts and assistance to reach this point, where INB member states collectively managed to develop a working draft that reflects what they think is crucial and necessary as substantive elements of the instrument. We believe that this working draft is a good base to proceed in the process of drafting the instrument, that we all hope will contribute to improving and developing the efforts of the international community in the prevention, preparedness and response to pandemics.

Ladies and gentlemen, our meeting today comes in line the mandate stipulated in the decision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Special Session of the World Health Assembly SSA2 (5), to identify the provision of the WHO Constitution under which the instrument should be adopted. In this regard, it is necessary to remember the main reasons that brought us together and encouraged WHO member states to start this process of developing a new instrument to deal with pandemics.

The international community has suffered for more than two years - and still is - from the consequences of an unprecedented pandemic, which has left hundreds of millions of infected persons, millions of victims, and economic losses that are difficult to measure. During this painful experience, countries of the EMR group along with all other countries experienced difficulties at various levels in dealing with the pandemic, for various reasons, including, for example, weak health systems, difficulties in accessing countermeasures, lack of necessary funding, and many other reasons. This pandemic has also proven - beyond any doubt – that the existing regulations and measures responsible for organizing the efforts of the international community are insufficient, lack equity and there is an urgent need to develop a new instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response to enable countries around the globe to strengthen national, regional and global capacities and resilience to future pandemics. Simply, we must not allow this tragic experience to happen once again.

For that reason, EMR believes that the new instrument should be drafted on the basis of international solidarity, need for equity and a clear commitment. Commitment of all members of the international community to exert their utmost

efforts, collectively, to confront and curb this challenge through a collaborative effort. Reaching this goal will not come through repeating previous experiences, which witnessed agreement on procedures that lack mechanisms for follow-up, monitoring or implementation, and considered by different parties insufficient for dealing with such situations, or agreement on noncompulsory procedures that do not bind member states. The enormity of the event that the world witnessed requires decisive action to prevent it from recurrence.

Finally, EMR would like to emphasize that developing a new instrument that is binding on all states parties must be done in accordance with the principle of Equity, inclusivity, balance any new commitments or obligations must take into account the different needs and capacities of states. It will not be logical or acceptable that the new instrument imposes obligations on states without assisting them in fulfilling these obligations or allowing them timely access to the required tools without creating new conditionalities. Drafting a new document that is not balanced will only lead to a new failure. The EMR group looks forward to productive deliberations on the second session.

Thank you