

Statement by

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***Theme of discussion: "Health for peace, peace for health"***

Chair, Madame President, Mr. Director-General Tedros, Excellencies, dear colleagues - and friends.

Let me start by congratulating the every-one on their election.

Now, more than two years since a public health emergency of international concern was declared by the World Health Organisation, the highest level of alarm under international law.

The spread of COVID-19 has put a strain on us all, and I would especially like to thank the staff of the World Health Organisation for their hard work and resilience during this difficult period.

So where do we stand now? What have we learned in building a better integrated system?

Building on solidarity, going forward, we fully support work on strengthening the systems and tools for pandemic preparedness and response, supported by strong governance and financing. It is of vital importance to continue the work on the pandemic treaty and the Covax cooperation.

The pandemic has also shown us more than ever the need to harness the power of science, research, innovation, data, and digital technologies. This is essential for health promotion, disease prevention, early diagnosis and rapid response.