



## Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

### WHO EXECUTIVE BOARD 148<sup>th</sup> Session (virtual) (18-26 January, 2021)

*Agenda item 14.2: Strengthening preparedness for health emergencies: implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)”*

**Mr. Chairman,**

Pakistan has noted the interim report of the IHR Review Committee, and appreciates the efforts of the WHO and the Review Committee in this regard.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed systemic gaps and vulnerabilities in health systems globally vis-à-vis pandemic preparedness and response. It has also shown that how quickly any new virus can sweep away decades of hard-won social and economic progress.

The interim report of the IHR Review Committee also identifies important pointers related to States’ capacities, early warning and methodology of determining a public health emergency of international concern. The Review Committee must minimize all factors that can cause delays, as pointed by the Chinese delegation.

There is an opportunity to translate this pandemic as a catalyst for lasting and systemic change in preparedness for better responding to future incidents. There is a renewed realization that more decisive and effective steps may be taken for developing IHR core capabilities.

**Mr. Chairman,**

At the same time, the existing level of collaboration and assistance needs to be scaled up and aligned with national efforts meaningfully in order for all countries to develop strong resilient, and integrated health systems. We believe that any discourse on IHR must embed the focus on technical assistance, financing and capacity building to allow developing countries to achieve their public health goals.

**Mr. Chairman,**

It is important to ensure that the COVID-19 vaccine is distributed early and equitably to everyone. Health workers and older people are the priority in all countries, rich or poor. The advance purchase agreements should not deprive the developing countries from getting equitable access to the vaccine. This is a test of international solidarity.

I Thank You.

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