**Statement of the Republic of Slovenia**

**75th Session of the World Health Assembly**

**22–28 May 2022**

**Agenda Item 3:** Address by Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General and General discussion “Health for peace – Peace for Health”

Excellencies, ladies, and gentlemen, Slovenia aligns itself with the Statement of the EU and its Member States.

Dear Director General,

At the beginning of this year, we have finally seen rays of hope that we might be on our way out of the acute phase of the pandemic. Driven by the lessons learned, we are now striving to bridge the gaps that the pandemic made so painfully obvious in our health systems.

These endeavours have now been overshadowed by the unjustified aggression of the Russian Federation on Ukraine. Any loss of human life is regrettable; and when related to destruction of civilian, including health infrastructure, also incomprehensibly tragic.

Peace is fundamental to health and prosperity. We cannot fully recover from pandemic and reach the most vulnerable while conflicts rage around the world, shots are fired, and bombs are dropped. We cannot succeed with the goals set in health policies if our common values, such as solidarity and nobody left behind, are being violated.

Without united and harmonized approach of all stakeholders at global level we cannot successfully focus on climate change, endangering not only the health of our populations but also increasing the risk to our very survival. Present crises should be a wake-up call. We, ministers of health and the whole health community, have a duty to speak out, to worn and advise our governments, while there is still someone to hear us.

There is, however, a sense of optimism with several initiatives taking place to strengthen the Global Health Architecture, with WHO at the centre. We should continue, based on the Report of WHO Pan-European commission on health and sustainable development, to put health and investments in health innovations high on the political agenda when discussing future developments of our societies. This is crucial, not only for advancing in health but also for succeeding with the development goals globally.

Equity and nobody left behind has been a longstanding priority for Slovenia. To overcome the present situation, to ensure access to health services for all, including those, living in conflict areas, significant multilateral efforts are needed, involving also civil society.

Slovenia is ready to play its role- be it through WHO or other fora.

I thank you for your attention.