

**Opening remarks
Member State briefing on COVID-19
WHO HQ, Geneva, Switzerland
24 September 2020**

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, dear colleagues and friends,

Thank you for joining us for this week's Member State briefing.

We have a full schedule today, so I will keep my remarks brief.

First, we will hear from Her Excellency Mrs Acosta, Vice-Minister of Health of the Dominican Republic, on her country's experience in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Muchas gracias, your excellency.

Next up will be Professor Lothar Wieler, President of the Robert Koch institute in Germany, and the Chair of the Review Committee on the functioning of the International Health Regulations during the COVID-19 response.

Professor Wieler has kindly accepted to attend this briefing, together with the Vice-Chair of the Review Committee, Professor Lucille Blumberg from South Africa, and the Rapporteur, Professor Preben Aavista from Norway.

I was pleased to learn that the committee has already met three times since I convened the group on September 8th.

In accordance with the IHR, I also invited Member States, UN agencies and non-state actors to nominate representatives to the Committee.

More than 60 member States, five UN agencies and 25 non-State actors attended the first open meeting on the 9th of September. Five Member States submitted their statements to the Review Committee.

I encourage all of you, all Member States, to provide your inputs to the Review Committee in advance of their next open meeting, which is set for the 7th of October. Your input is essential to guide their deliberations.

I have also asked the Chair to provide an update to the Executive Board Special Session on the 6th of October, together with the Co-Chairs of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response and the Chair of the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee.

The work of these three committees, which I established as requested by WHA resolution 73.1, is crucial for our ongoing assessment of the COVID-19 response.

I look forward to the outcome of their deliberations.

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We will then be hearing from our Health Emergencies chief, Dr Mike Ryan, and other colleagues about country priorities and needs, including our efforts to support preparedness, resilience, response and recovery, along with an overview of how we report on the WHO COVID-19 response budget.

Finally today, we will hear an update from Dr Bruce Aylward on progress with the ACT- Accelerator.

Tomorrow, the ACT-Accelerator is set to release its status report and plan, providing an overview of goals, approach, achievements to date and near-term priorities.

An investment case will also be released, laying out the economic rationale for investing in the ACT-Accelerator.

This will guide the coming scale-up phase of the ACT-Accelerator. Bruce will go into more detail on it.

We're also looking forward to a high-level session on the ACT-Accelerator at the UN General Assembly next Wednesday, convened by the Secretary-General, and co-hosted by the United Kingdom, South Africa and WHO.

Thank you all once again for your continued support and commitment.

I thank you.