

Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan

At the request of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations Office and other international organizations at Geneva, the Director-General has the honour to transmit to the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly the attached statement of the Government of Israel (see Annex).

ANNEX

STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL TO THE SIXTY-SEVENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

1. The State of Israel objects to the consideration of the agenda item entitled “Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan” and calls for the deletion of this item from the agenda of the World Health Assembly. This item is clearly a politically motivated one whose only purpose is to single out one Member State – Israel.
2. The Assembly of the World Health Organization should, as its other bodies, remain professional and focus only on thematic health issues and not geographical ones. Furthermore, it should not be subject to political pressure or interests. This regrettable annual ritual undermines the credibility of the highly professional nature of the World Health Organization and Assembly. The World Health Assembly is not an appropriate forum to discuss political matters and is not a substitute for direct bilateral negotiations. If there are any concerns, they should be discussed bilaterally between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.
3. The constantly improving health situation in the Palestinian territory, as reflected by a number of indicators, and the fact that all residents of the Golan Heights enjoy high quality medical services equal to all other residents of Israel, only emphasizes the fact that it would be more appropriate for the World Health Assembly to turn its attention towards high risk regions in which its involvement is really required and highly expected. It is regrettable that the World Health Organization devotes an important part of its resources to this type of activities, whereas they could have been used to handle real health challenges in other parts of the world.
4. The above is even more valid given the ongoing deteriorating situation in Syria, especially with regard to the health situation of the people of Syria and the incomprehensible destruction caused to the public health facilities of the country. It is absurd to discuss the Golan inhabitants’ situation which is totally identical to the other parts of Israel, while Syria’s declining situation is not discussed. We urge the World Health Assembly to discuss the real disturbing situation on the ground, where Syrian men, women and children are being prevented from access to health services and where health infrastructure has been destroyed by the Syrian regime.
5. The State of Israel regards the continuous World Health Assembly’s debate on the health conditions in the Golan as an absurd example of the way the Assembly’s agenda is cynically abused for political reasons, whilst the Syrian regime prevents its own citizens from getting basic health services and treatment.

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