

# PRESS RELEASE

## *Philippine Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva*

14-16 Allee David Morse, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland • Telephone No. +41 22 716 1930 • <http://www.genevapm.dfa.gov.ph>  
E-mail: [geneva.pm@dfa.gov.ph](mailto:geneva.pm@dfa.gov.ph) • Facebook: Philippine Consulate General, Geneva URL: <https://www.facebook.com/PHinGeneva/>



### PH COMMITS TO STRENGTHENING GLOBAL PANDEMIC PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN TALKS TO AMEND THE INTERNATIONAL HEALTH REGULATIONS



*The Philippine delegation to the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations held on 14-15 November 2022 at the WHO Headquarters in Geneva: (L-R) Ms Pilar Binuya (Philippine Mission, Geneva); Ms Richelle Abellera (Epidemiology Bureau, DOH); Dr Maria Soledad Antonio (Director, Bureau of International Health Cooperation, DOH); and Mr Jeffrey Valdez (Philippine Mission, Geneva).*

**Geneva, 15 November 2022** – The Philippines assured the international community of its continued contribution to multilateral efforts aimed at enhancing the capacity of countries to address future pandemics during the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (WGIHR) at the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Philippine delegation conveyed to other member states that the country is prepared to do its part in the historic task of amending the International Health Regulations (IHR) to make it more responsive to future pandemics and avoid a repeat of the tragic loss of lives resulting from COVID-19. The delegation also emphasized the need for an approach based on inclusivity and transparency as it welcomed the participation of relevant stakeholders to enrich the discussions of the working group.

The IHR is an instrument of international law that is legally-binding on 196 countries, including the Philippines. It was first adopted by WHO member states in 1969 and was last revised in 2005 following the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). The IHR sets the rights and obligations of countries in relation to public health events.

The WGIHR composed of all member states of the WHO met for the first time on 14 and 15 November 2022 to agree on its timeline and method of work. The WGIHR is scheduled to meet five more times and aims to arrive at a consensus text of the IHR with targeted amendments by May 2024. The WGIHR will run parallel with Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) that aims to craft an international pandemic treaty also by May 2024. **END**