

WHO @ 7 + 5 = Health For All**Director-General's summary**

Three years ago, I declared a public health emergency of international concern over the global spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) – the highest level of alarm under the International Health Regulations (2005), and for the moment, the only level of alarm. As we enter the fourth year of the pandemic, COVID-19 remains a global health emergency, but there is no doubt that we are in a far better situation now than we were a year ago, when the Omicron wave was at its peak.

We remain hopeful that in the coming year, the world will transition to a new phase in which we reduce hospitalizations and deaths to the lowest possible level, and health systems are able to manage COVID-19 in an integrated and sustainable way.

Vaccination remains an essential part of our strategic approach. Through our partnership in the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator and COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the ACT Accelerator, we supported the provision of more than one billion vaccines and procured 320 000 courses of antiviral medicine. The decreasing impact of the COVID 19 pandemic saw the reopening of our operational environments globally, bringing with it the challenge of getting back to the “new normal”.

Other infectious diseases persist. On polio eradication, after an all-time low of just five wild poliovirus cases in 2021, we saw an increase last year, with 20 cases in Pakistan, two in Afghanistan and eight in Mozambique. In October 2022, donors pledged US\$ 2.6 billion to support the work of WHO and our partners to consign polio to history.

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