



WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY SECOND SPECIAL SESSION (WHASS)

29 November 29 – 1 December 2021

Provisional agenda item 2

Consideration of the benefits of developing a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response with a view towards the establishment of an intergovernmental process to draft and negotiate such a convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response, taking into account the report of the Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies

Since the start of the pandemic the International Council of Nurses (ICN) has urged governments to protect nurses and health workers, yet, despite promises made, many health workers still do not have access to vaccines, high infection rates continue and at least 115,000 health workers have died from COVID-19. This is a direct result of insufficiencies and failures of existing processes for health emergency preparedness and response. As such, ICN strongly supports the development of a new instrument on pandemic preparedness and response, particularly one that safeguards the health workforce and ensures equity in access to medical countermeasures.

If the promises made to support, strengthen, and protect healthcare workers now and in the future are to be kept, an instrument that maintains high-level political commitment and ensures transparent and collective leadership is needed.