

SPEECH OF INFARMED PRESIDENT, RUI SANTOS IVO

3A's CONFERENCE

Esteemed Minister of Health, President of the EU Council of Health
Ministers, Mme Marta Temido

Esteemed Director-General of WHO, Dr. Tedros Adhanom
Ghebreyesu

Esteemed European Commissioner for Health, Mme Stella Kyriakides

Esteemed Member of the European Parliament, Mme Dolors
Montserrat

Dear colleagues, dear speakers, dear participants

It is a great honour and privilege to welcome you all to the 3A's
Conference organised by INFARMED, under the Portuguese
Presidency.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the speakers of this conference, representing stakeholders, from patients, consumers and health professionals, to wholesalers and the medical devices and pharmaceutical industries, the colleagues from all agencies, the European Medicines Agency and the European Commission.

We sure hoped to meet in different circumstances, as we would be truly delighted to welcome you in person, here at INFARMED, in our beautiful Lisbon. We are living quite challenging times. However, we all are now quite used to these tools and I'm sure we'll have a very productive and fruitful conference.

We are now more than half-way in the Portuguese Presidency. This is the moment for us to come together and discuss the challenges regarding availability, accessibility and affordability of medicines and medical devices. We need to address them in an integrated ethical and sustainable way, in the spirit of European solidarity and leave no one behind.

Over the past months we have promoted the dialogue and co-operation to enhance knowledge, trust, confidence and transparency

between all the relevant actors in the pharmaceutical area, in order to strengthen public health in Europe.

We, in the Member States, have undertaken these actions in a particularly challenging context. We all have been at the forefront of the battle against COVID-19, together with EMA and the European Commission. Despite the hard times and all the strains, we have all come closer and rise to the challenges.

In this sense, our conference aims to give a renewed momentum to the discussion on how to address these longstanding topics that have been on the agenda of those with the highest responsibilities in the European pharmaceutical policy and look to the future, to a post-COVID pharmaceutical and health sector.

The conference programme has been designed bearing in mind the need to promote a multi-stakeholder forum, allowing the debate to continue on the subject of accessibility, availability and affordability of medicines and medical devices, particularly the challenges of managing this “trinity” in a balanced way.

That is also our aim during the two days of the conference. The topics we are about to undertake are vast and can look daunting. The wide audience that we have gathered today at this conference will surely

contribute to set the direction of travel to develop these pillars and identify concrete measures.

As you are probably aware, we wish for today's debate can to inform on collaborative approaches, define priorities and policy options that can be translated into concrete actions that can be embedded both in the Portuguese proposal for Council conclusions on access to medicines and medical devices and on the pharmaceutical strategy implementation plan.

We aim ultimately to contribute on promoting Health at EU level, through a larger and better cooperation between the different NCAs and stakeholders in the EU, namely, in the area of medicines and medical devices.

I can assure you that INFARMED, with its integrated scope of competences, remains fully committed to constructively participate and collaborate on the development of a model that would reinforce the EU regulatory framework as required while focusing on the needs of health systems and patients. We have to be persistent in our collaboration and firm in pursuing our objectives.

I can only wish that we continue our work towards the goals and ambitions set for a stronger health sector with convergent approaches. I also hope that we overcome the pandemic very soon and are able to meet again face to face.

Let me give you a very brief overview of the Programme.

Before we start with the I Panel, allow me to finish by thanking

- Enormously all my colleagues from other agencies and different departments of the Ministries of Health and the EMA and the European Commission for managing their time and sharing with their experience and contributions;
- Most recognised to all representatives of all stakeholders;
- Wholeheartedly my colleagues, the Presidency team for their devoted work, close collaboration and support in the organisation of this Conference.

I would also like to thank the Minister of Health for her support and for honouring us all this morning to open and address the meeting.

Thank you.