



INTERNATIONAL WEBINARS AND LIVE EVENTS

WHAT'S LAW GOT TO DO WITH COVID-19?

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IHR = **International Health Regulations**.

IHR is **unique** and forceful as a **framework to manage response**, where everyone is bound at the same time by its regulations. The main purposes of IHR are: to **prevent**, to **protect**, to control and to provide a technic **health response** to disease, while **avoiding interference** with national authorities.

5 key mechanisms of IHR:

- **Notify** public state emergencies in advance if something could constitute a global health threat.
- Allow proper surveillance, via **national** core capacities response mechanisms.
- **Recommend measures** that are evidence based and guide responses.
- Review committees and systems for external independent **evidence-based advises** for implementing IHR.
- **Accountability mechanism**: states take decisions in their own national capacities, but each party must go through accountability mechanism.

What is the role of WHO in the response to COVID19?

Key principles of WHO response: **Proportionality**; **Respect** (implementation of regulations should be in full respect with dignity and human rights of people); **Sharing of information** (objective and impartial way); **Guidance and recommendations**; **Collaboration and assistance**

Coordination is of paramount importance. If there wasn't the WHO, the world would have to re-invent the WHO. Its coordinating function role is at the core of its mandate.

***Gian Luca Burci**, Adjunct Professor, International Law; Academic Advisor, Global Health Centre*

IHR is a **modern instrument** and a revolutionary one to prevent the spread of disease. It is an operational instrument. IHR is embedded in WHO and **WHO is the manager of IHR**.

It is important to **coordinate IHR with other bodies of law** such as **human rights**. Today, IHR integrates human rights. We can assess impact of health emergency on human rights worldwide.

Priorities for IHR and new challenges:

It is obvious that if you want to plan for the **next pandemic**, it will not be limited to IHR and WHO. It is a **global change that is needed**. Some realism is necessary.

Still, with all our science, practice and expertise, we struggle to face this crisis.

The **IHR needs to be revised**. If there are weaknesses, they have to be addressed. There is a risk in opening this negotiation instrument, but for me it is **worth taking this risk**.

We observed many **unilateral responses to the COVID19** crisis. Most of them were only short-term measures, which is a disaster. This is a **failure from WHO** not to provide a long-term multilateral plan.

In the future, **we need clear rules** for the sharing of **pathogens**.

IHR has disappeared since the beginning of the crisis. Does it still play a role in the middle of a pandemic?

The purpose was to **prevent the pandemic**, but when we are in it, what is its role?

Question of leadership is very important. Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus exercises a role of moral leadership. He is depoliticizing the role of WHO, emphasizing the importance to save lives.