



Statement by
the Republic of Slovenia

on the

Occasion of the 72nd World Health Assembly (Geneva, 20 – 28 May 2019),

Agenda Item 3: Address by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General

Geneva, 21 May 2019

Mister/Madam President,

Director General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen!

Slovenia would like to align itself with the Statement of EU.

Universal health coverage with an aim to leave no one behind is an appropriate goal but also a challenge for all of our countries, no matter big or small, rich or poor. Based on the experience of Slovenia what serves us most in confronting this challenge is the exchange of good practice, data and evidence.

In European region we had many opportunities within the cooperation with WHO for such exchange in last decade. Let me mention two extremely important events:

- The Tallinn Conference, where we reaffirmed the values of the Tallinn Charter and reflected on progress in health systems strengthening; and
- The High-level regional meeting in Sitges in Spain, where we shared evidence and experience of how governments can adapt their health systems to effectively meet the growing challenge of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Slovenia would also like to accentuate the importance of some newly developed WHO initiatives and networks in our region. The Small Countries Initiative, for example, is very important in assuring, that despite limited capacities in small countries, we can succeed with the implementation of Agenda 2030 and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. Small countries struggle with professional and other capacities in health sector management, research and delivery and can benefit a lot by working together with other countries with similar constrains.

Slovenia appreciates the global role and contribution of the WHO European Region in the transformation process in the last 10 years. Our results so far confirm, that strong and visionary leadership with evidence-based, sustainable and systematic policy

approaches and a persistent focus on implementation at country level, work. In many of our countries, the Country offices played an important role in this regard. We strongly support DG's efforts to strengthen country presence.

Aiming to universal coverage addressing better access and availability of medicines is relevant for all Member States. Common understanding and international cooperation is vital for success. I believe that we will be able to agree on the Resolution on Improving the Transparency of Markets for Medicines, Vaccines, and other Health-related Products and Technologies which will encourage our national governments to take measures to improve the transparency of price.

Mister/Madame president!

In line with the Astana declaration, strengthening primary health care and public health functions are two key priority areas in Slovenia. We have a long history of working together with the WHO in developing innovative approaches and good practice. In particular this is true in confronting the challenge of leaving no one behind and addressing the needs of different vulnerable groups. In assuring attainment of those most vulnerable and hard to reach, not only to curative services but also to screenings and preventive services, we have developed models together that go beyond the health sector and include action of social and other community services and civil society.

Long and fruitful cooperation in this regard with the WHO EURO Venice office on Health and Development has resulted in a common decision to organize the first European High-level Conference on Health Equity in my country in the capital of Ljubljana in June this year.

I am convinced that during the conference some new evidence and new models will be brought to the attention of us, decision makers that will contribute to accelerating progress towards healthy and prosperous lives for all in the WHO European Region and beyond. A warm welcome to all that have decided to attend.

Thank you!