European Union Statement

WHO
72nd World Health Assembly
(20-28 May 2019)

Agenda item – Programme Budget

Geneva, 21 May 2019

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –
EU Statement

Honourable Chair,

Distinguished Deputy Director-General,

Excellencies,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States thank the Secretariat for the proposed programme budget.

We welcome the new format of the programme budget focussing on a more integrated approach aiming to align and build synergies in delivering the work of the three levels of the Organization.

* Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
We stress the need to prioritize and to better concentrate on those functions, where WHO has a significant comparative advantage.

Thus we emphasize that WHO’s normative and coordinative functions need to be adequately financed.

We are concerned that over the past years, the organization has not invested adequate resources into the enabling functions compared to other UN agencies which potentially puts the entire organization at risk. This includes adequate funding for accountability functions and the security of staff.

If the programme budget is to be the key accountability tool to hold the secretariat to account, and to set out clearly the rationale for subsequent resourcing decisions, it has to clearly outline and measure what outputs and outcomes the secretariat itself promises to deliver.

We welcome the efforts to strengthen WHO’s work in countries and we expect that these efforts will be accompanied by adequate oversight, also of the Governing Bodies. Thus we expect, that in future sessions of the governing bodies, MS will have the opportunity to provide their guidance and oversight to WHO’s work in countries based on adequate formal information including reference to the staffing and funding of country offices.

Regarding the overall budget, we note the proposed substantial increase for the base budget to be fully funded by voluntary resources. We expect WHO to use the new fundraising strategy as a coordinated approach to generate these funds.

Regarding the realism of the budget proposal, we take note of the confidence of the Secretariat that it will be able to raise the needed funds. However, we would like to know how much of the needed funding can already be projected now.
Finally we support the draft Appropriation Resolution as is stands and we are ready to adopt the Proposed Programme Budget 2020-2021.

When implementing this programme budget, we expect timely and accurate information from the Secretariat on how the available resources including the flexible resources have allocated in a strategic manner.

Thank you