European Union
Statement

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

Agenda item 18.1 – UN Reform

Geneva, 24 May 2019

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –
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EU Statement

Honourable Chair,
Distinguished Director-General,
Colleagues,

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, the Republic of Moldova as well as Georgia align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank the Secretariat for presenting the separate document on United Nations development system reform. Having this document for the 72nd WHA deliberations was our proposal in January.

We wish to reiterate our strong position that UNDS reform and WHO reform must be fully aligned and mutually reinforcing. UNDS reform is a crucial process for the

* Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
whole UN, including for WHO, and has serious implications for WHO’s country presence and role as a key player in global health. Alignment with and engagement with the United Nations reform gives WHO an opportunity to reposition itself and focus on where it can provide the best added value.

We underline the necessity of close cooperation between WHO Representatives and the UN Resident Coordinators and country teams to effectively contribute to achievement of all SDGs, and in particular of SDG3.

WHO must retain its leading role in health-related activities and policy advising at country level, while ensuring that all multisectoral challenges are addressed commonly by all relevant UN agencies and other health actors in a coordinated and efficient manner. To this end and to keep the WHO impact on UN country presence, an active and constructive participation of WHO Representatives in work of UN country teams is necessary.

We call WHO to actively engage in shaping and revising the UN Development Assistance Framework and ensuring its alignment with the 13th General Programme of Work. The UN Development Assistance Framework, once containing the strong health dimension, should also serve as a reference point for country cooperation strategies and national health strategies.

To actively participate in shaping the UNDAF, constructively collaborate with country teams and efficiently contribute to achievement of SDGs, WHO country offices needs to be well sized and adequately resourced. While noting the information document on WHO country presence, we call for further analysis on where such support is needed most, what steps would ensure relevant strengthening, and whether there is a necessity for keeping all WHO country
offices elsewhere. We call again for regularly submitted detailed information on how the particular WHO Country Offices are financed.

We note the necessity to increase the financial obligations for WHO to participate in common cost sharing system. We urge WHO to timely fulfill all its commitments and to inform the Member States of all the implications that these commitments have. We call for monitoring the impact of these commitments for resources mobilization.

Chair,

The UNDS reform is a great opportunity for both Member States to achieve SDGs quicker and to UN agencies to strengthen the efficiency, accountability and coherence of their work. We call for its full implementation without necessary delays and for regular update to the WHO Governing Bodies of its progress.

Thank you.