Thank you Madame chair

Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered by Romania on behalf of the European Union and its member states.

The world, not just the health community, needs to respond to environmental health risks and challenges. For this, intersectoral actions are required, as climate change and other environmental changes are increasingly negatively affecting people’s health and well-being.

Malta has been active in the Environment and Health process for many years and has set up an intersectoral Climate Action Board for climate action, backed by legislation. In line with the Ostrava Declaration, Malta has worked on a situation analysis, vision and objectives to improve environmental health in various realms through our National Portfolio of Actions on environment and health.

Apart from leading several initiatives for a greener health system, the Health Ministry is contributing to the development of a Low Carbon Development Strategy for Malta. National initiatives include the promotion of car sharing, government subsidies on transport and financial incentives to electrify mobility.
Since Malta’s switch from heavy fuel oil to gas for power generation, increasing numbers of motorised cars are the principal source of air pollution [on the island]. Modal shift and electrification are essential to bring an improvement in air quality. Our Prime Minister has recently announced his vision of Malta being one of the first European Countries to introduce a cut-off date for the importation of petrol and diesel vehicles.

Further seeking to protect our environment and health from plastic pollution while reducing litter and consumption of plastic products, a Single-Use Plastic Products Strategy for Malta is currently out for consultation.

Malta is very pleased to see WHO governing body meetings now paperless, and would like to suggest that WHO encourages delegates returning for future governing body meetings to keep and re-use their badge holders and lanyards, only distributing these on request.

Being a small island state, Malta relates to many of the issues faced by Small Island Developing States. We commend WHO’s work on, and welcome the Draft plan of action on climate change and health in small island developing States, as well as the Global strategy on health, environment and climate change. Transformation is indeed needed to improve lives and well-being sustainably through healthy environments.

Thank you