CROSS REGIONAL STATEMENT on Gender Mainstreaming in WHO’s Budget and Planning Framework

PBAC AGENDA ITEM 3.2 and WHA Agenda item 11.1 – Proposed Programme Budget 2020-2021

Thank you Chair.

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the following countries – Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Perú, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom, Uruguay, and my own country Mexico.

We welcome the commitment in the budget to integrate equity, gender equality and human rights across the program areas as articulated in output 4.2.6. It is through this integration that we can take practical steps to reach the health goals and make leaving no one behind a reality, rather than a slogan.

The integration of equity, gender equality and human rights is in line with WHO’s commitments under the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UN SWAP 2.0 includes 17 standards related to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Let me highlight a few of these standards related to the budget and planning framework:

- committing to and achieving gender-related SDG results;
- achieving programmatic results on gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- undertaking gender-responsive performance management;
• tracking financial resources allocated to gender equality work;
• establishing a financial benchmark for gender equality work;
• and building gender-related capacities.

Meeting these commitments requires strong and visible senior management commitment, adequate resourcing, and engagement and accountability across all three levels of the organization.

We welcome the progress made since the January Executive Board on this issue.

This includes elevating the Gender Equity and Rights function to the Director General’s Office. We would, however, underscore the importance of ensuring a strong linkage to the program areas as well as mandate to influence vital corporate processes in order to ensure ownership, implementation and impact.

We also strongly endorse the integration of gender, equity and rights as an assessment parameter in the Balance Scorecard Approach. This will ensure that gender, equity and rights are fully mainstreamed within WHO’s performance management cycle.

There is no question this will require additional human and financial resources, including for capacity building across the three levels of the organization. This is a core function which requires resourcing through core resources.

We would welcome the Secretariat’s feedback on its plans to advance UN SWAP standards related to: establishing a financial benchmark for gender equality work and tracking financial resources allocated to gender equality work.