European Union
Statement

WHO
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Agenda item 11.4
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Geneva, 20 May 2019

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –
Honourable Chair,

Distinguished Director-General,

Colleagues,

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

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

We welcome the report by the WHO Secretariat on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We attach great importance to the Sustainable Development Goals and are fully committed to their timely achievement. They are integrated, indivisible and global, based on a spirit of strengthened solidarity and the determination to leave no one behind. There is a lot to do to achieve the SDGs, to which we all committed in 2015. More momentum is required for their implementation at national, regional and global levels.

* Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
WHO’s commitment to meet this challenge is well noted: its internal reform, including the transformation agenda and the GPW13, the implementation of the UNDS reform, and the Director General Office’s development of the Global Action Plan for SDG 3 will help to ensure coordinated support for accelerating the implementation of the health-related goals and targets by 2030. We welcome the focus of the “3-billion” targets in the GPW, addressing UHC and health systems strengthening, as well as public health functions including preventing, protecting and responding to health emergencies and the social, environmental and economic determinants of health. We stand together with WHO in promoting “whole-of-government”, “whole-of-society” and “Health in All Policies” approaches.

We believe UHC is central to the attainment of the SDGs. In this regard, we note with great concern the findings in the report that half of the world’s population do not have full coverage of essential health services and just under 100 million are pushed further into poverty because of their expenditure on health. The EU and its Member States have been staunch supporters of the UHC agenda globally and we encourage WHO to work even harder to accelerate progress, so we achieve UHC by 2030.

We welcome the prominence of a rights-based approach, which is crucial to ensuring that effective coverage of integrated high-quality prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative services are made available for all. When large parts of a population are not given proper support or are unaware of their health status, this comes at a high cost, both financially and socially, which those concerned can afford the least.

We note with concern that the family planning needs of 208 million women are still unmet. This is unacceptable and we encourage all partners to help us fill that gap. We also regret that the prevention and treatment coverage for harmful use of alcohol and drug use disorders remains inadequate. More action is required to address gaps in education and service provision in family planning, treatment of harmful use of alcohol and drug use disorders and overall the integration of promotion and prevention in health services, as we progress towards achieving UHC over the coming years.

Efforts on malaria are stalling, particularly in high burden countries and we remain concerned about the rise in multi-drug resistant TB. Given it is estimated that a third of all deaths associated
with AMR are due to drug-resistant TB, it is essential that AMR is integrated within TB strategies, as well as the wider SDG agenda.

The exponential increase of environmental threats such as air, water and soil pollution as well as climate change and their impact on health require more ambitious and coordinated action. For example, financing to meet water, sanitation and hygiene targets is still insufficient and must be expanded in order to achieve SDG 6 and capitalize on its health benefits.

The cost of achieving the SDGs will require a mix of domestic public, international and private sector support. We need to work closely together to make investments in health more effective and efficient for greater impact. The private sector, with its variety of stakeholders, should be better included as important partners for success.

We note the Secretariat’s important efforts to foster multi-stakeholder partnerships. We welcome the initiative to involve global health partners both within and beyond the UN system, including GFATM, Gavi, GFF, civil society, private sector, academia, donors and foundations.

In conclusion, we welcome the report’s foundation as far as possible on comprehensive and disaggregated sets of high-quality data. The importance of having evidence-based data, benchmarks and indicators cannot be overstated and should remain a priority, especially in view of further empowering WHO in measuring progress towards implementing the Agenda 2030.

Thank you, Chair.