



**Statement of the Republic of Slovenia
76th Session of the World Health Assembly
21–30 May 2023**

Agenda Item 13.1 and 13.2: “Universal health coverage” and “Political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, and mental health”

Honourable Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

Slovenia believes that Universal Health Coverage is an essential component of sustainable development. We commend WHO and UN for their efforts to promote UHC and access to health services for all. We also thank Thailand for championing the resolution we will consider today.

We all agree that primary health care is a foundation for UHC and crucial for providing comprehensive, integrated, and people-centred care. What next? Slovenia has a strong PHC, but we can see that more investments would be needed to address new challenges and demands; in digitalisation, for example, and in increasing and retaining health workforce.

No matter how big or rich the country is, we are all looking for improvements in PHC. Many good practices have already been developed in our countries. We are convinced, that sharing these practices and working together within WHO in developing innovative solutions would serve us all in proceeding faster with UHC.

In Slovenia we have learned that we can only identify and address the needs of most vulnerable through social participation. Community approach, involving other sectors and NGOs works best, we have demonstrated in 25 local communities. On Monday Slovenia co-hosted a side-event, with Thailand, Norway, Madagascar, Tunisia and WHO. We discussed the importance of social participation to ensure that nobody is left behind. We will take this work forward in a shape of a resolution to be tabled for the WHA77, through the EB154.

In addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs), we commend the secretariat for the new document in Appendix 3 and see approaches outlined as cost effective and efficient. It is on us MSs now to ensure implementation in our countries. Slovenia will contribute to the work of the NCD office in Copenhagen, but we wish to reiterate that we need global solutions. NCDs are especially prone to risks from commercial determinants of health. We expect WHO to support

governments and NGOs with evidence and technical advice when advocating for best buys, therefore more staff and resources are needed.

In conclusion, Slovenia reaffirms its commitment to UHC, invites countries to work together in achieving this essential goal and calls on the World Health Organization to continue its leadership in promoting UHC and addressing NCDs.

Thank you.