



European Union

Statement

WHO

156th Executive Board

(3-11 February 2025)

Agenda item 27.1 – Appointment of the Regional Director for Africa

Geneva, 4 February 2025

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Mr/Madam Chair, Mr Director-General, Distinguished colleagues, Mr Regional Director,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina* and Georgia, the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

It is with great sadness that we learned of the sudden passing of the Regional Director-Elect of the African Region, Dr Faustine Ndugulile. His passing is a great loss to the WHO African Region and global health community. We hope that a new, equally competent Regional Director will be elected soon.

As the end of her tenure approaches, we would like to take this opportunity to appreciate and congratulate, Dr Matshidiso Moeti, on the impressive achievements of the past 10 years, not least the ambitious transformation programme she has led since 2015 towards ensuring a more effective, results-driven and accountable Organization.

Dr Moeti's leadership in cultivating strong partnerships with traditional and new partners, and increasing engagement with women and young people in global health is also to be celebrated.

We welcome the increasing collaboration between the WHO Regional Office for Africa and the WHO Regional Office for Europe, not least, in areas including the Pathways to Leadership Programme which aims to strengthen leadership capacities of staff in the Organization. This innovative Programme was developed and implemented as a key part of the AFRO Transformation, and has now been implemented jointly by both Offices, together with EMRO, including combined staff cohorts.

At the programmatic level, collaborations on public health leadership, refugee and migrant health within a whole of route approach (together with EMRO), and most recently the inter-

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

regional response to Cyclone Chido demonstrate the importance and value of strong inter-regional connections and work, and we hope that these ways of working will be further strengthened in the coming years.

To conclude, Chair, we applaud Dr Moeti's leadership over the past decade and express our appreciation and gratitude for her tireless commitment and dedication to the people of the African Region.