



European Union

Statement

WHO

156th Executive Board

(3-11 February 2025)

Agenda item 27.2 – Appointment of the Regional Director for Europe

Geneva, 4 February 2025

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

I have the honour of delivering this joint statement on behalf of Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The European Union and its Member States congratulate Dr Hans Kluge on his reappointment as Regional Director for the WHO European Region.

The great support received for his nomination during the Regional Committee's meeting in October rewards his achievements during his first term, and is a tribute to his outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment to public health and the well-being of all in our Region.

Dr Kluge has proven to be a remarkable leader over the five past years, guiding our region and supporting Member States through unprecedented challenges. His first term has been marked by dramatic and ongoing crises, related to armed conflicts and climate change, that have profoundly tested health systems and international cooperation, including regional cooperation, requiring extraordinary resilience and decisive action from all of us.

Dear Dr Kluge,

We are grateful for your unwavering dedication to strengthen public health and health systems, promote international solidarity and cooperation, and advance global health during these troubled times. In this constant succession of crises, you have demonstrated your vital relevance. You have consistently been on the ground to support those most in need.

The unanimous trust of the Member States in our Region is a testimony of your exceptional diplomatic skills. This requires a unique leadership profile – one that seamlessly combines a drive for excellence with exemplary interpersonal skills, communication and dedication. Your

commitment to efficiency, cost containment, and improved governance is a beacon in our region and beyond. Your philosophy to permanently listen to the priorities of Member States and align regional actions to them is more crucial than ever at a critical time for the organization as a whole.

Dear Hans,

You now embark on your next term with a robust mandate from the Member States to lead the work and support WHO European Region in addressing the major health challenges of our time, leaving no one behind.

The European Union and its Member States reiterate their strong support for you and your teams, working hand in hand with the whole WHO family to deliver health for all. The EU is confident that under your continued leadership, the wide and significant challenges facing our region will be effectively addressed in a difficult resource context that will require effective prioritization. While recognizing the complex tasks ahead, we trust in your ability to deliver meaningful results and to be a decisive voice for our region in the organization.

We look forward to working closely with you on the development and implementation of a realistic and impactful second European Programme of Work, aligning with essential actions of the GPW14 and with a bold impetus for the work at country level.

Thank you.