Mr/Madam Chair, Honourable Delegates,

I deliver this statement in my capacity as UN Assistant Secretary-General and Coordinator of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement.

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Universal Health Coverage presents a tremendous opportunity to contribute to ending malnutrition in all its forms. Good nutrition, especially during a child’s first 1,000 days from pregnancy to age two, is the foundation for health, physical and cognitive development, and a key driver for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Essential nutrition services like breastfeeding and dietary counselling, management of acute malnutrition and provision of micronutrient supplements must be included in the core services delivered to everyone through the primary health care system, including by Community Health Workers.

Investing in these low-cost, high-impact nutrition interventions will unlock the potential of millions of children, help combat preventable child deaths and halt the rise of non-communicable diseases.

Every dollar invested in nutrition yields 16 dollars in return. Nutrition is a no-regret investment that has the potential to break the vicious intergenerational cycle of poverty and build more stable and resilient societies, laying a solid foundation upon which Universal Health Coverage can be achieved.

As we come close to the mid-point of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025, of which WHO is a host agency, I call on Member States to step up the fight against malnutrition, prioritise nutrition in the outcome document for the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage and to fully integrate nutrition in UHC plans, policies, training and action at all levels.

Thank you.