

European Union

Statement

WHO

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WHA74 - Item 13.1, 13.5, 13.8: Global action on patient safety, Antimicrobial resistance, Immunization Agenda 2030

Geneva, 26 May 2021

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Draft EU Statement

Chair,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

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

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

The EU commends the Secretariat for developing the Global action plan on patient safety through a truly consultative process, and we are happy to adopt it.

The EU welcomes the launch of Immunisation Agenda 2030. COVID-19 has had a serious impact on routine immunisation, particularly in high-risk countries

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

and settings, underlining the need to strengthen health systems, and prevent backsliding from achievements, particularly polio and measles. Immunisation is one of the most effective measures for preventing infectious diseases and must be maintained even through pandemics as a global public good. We must renew our focus on addressing vaccine hesitancy through increased community engagement, and WHO must play a leading role countering misinformation.

We welcome the progress in vaccinating against COVID-19, but concerningly progress has not been equal across and within countries. WHO Member States recognise the role of extensive immunisation against COVID-19 as a global public good for health, and we need to realise this by ensuring equitable access to quality, safe, effective vaccines for all.

The ACT – Accelerator, co-hosted by EU and WHO, and its COVAX Facility are critical in ensuring this equitable access. We call on Member States to support WHO and ACT-A including COVAX so that we end this pandemic. The EU and its Member States have committed over two and half billion euro in funding and guarantees to the COVAX Facility to date, and we are proud to express our solidarity and joint action on vaccine sharing. We call on other High Income Countries to do the same.

Chair,

We are also facing the silent pandemic of antimicrobial resistance. The global threat of AMR must be addressed through a coordinated, multi-sectoral,

inclusive One Health approach. The Tripartite Plus and the One Health Global Leaders Group are particularly important to maintain urgency and visibility of the AMR challenge on the global agenda as well as enhance cooperation in tackling this threat.

However, we also need action at the national level, and we stress the need to accelerate the implementation of One Health National Action Plans and the strengthening of health systems enhancing future pandemic prevention and preparedness. The current pandemic has resulted in the increasing misuse of antimicrobials including in COVID-19 patients, highlighting the need for strengthened antimicrobial stewardship involving health workers, and incentivized R&D on, and equitable access to antimicrobials.

The AMR Multi Partner Trust Fund is an important financing mechanism to accelerate such efforts, but we call on Member States to work towards sufficient and sustainable funding for AMR-specific and sensitive actions across the One Health spectrum, including at country level.