

European Union

Statement

WHO

74th World Health Assembly
(24 May-1 June 2021)

WHA74 - Item 14, 15, 16: Health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Health workforce, Working for health: five-year action plan for health employment and inclusive economic growth (2017–2021), Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery, Committing to implementation of the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016−2030)

Geneva, 28 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 Turkey, 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 and its Member states recall the impact that the current pandemic has on the delivery of essential health care services and the disruptions observed by a

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

significant number of countries worldwide, that seriously hamper the achievement of UHC and threaten the health-related goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the achievements made so far.

We thank Ethiopia and Senegal for leading the resolution on protecting, safeguarding and investing in the health and care workforce, and Jamaica for leading the resolution strengthening nursing and midwifery: investments in education, jobs, leadership, and service delivery. [if EU co-sponsoring, insert reference here].

We welcome the second progress report of the SDG 3 Global Action for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All which was published last week, and commend WHO for its coordinating role in this process. This progress report reflects how enhanced cooperation among the 13 agencies leads to greater impact at the country level on the path towards recovery from the pandemic and with a view to achieving the health-related SDGs.

The EU and its Member States consider the health and care workforce, health service, including nursing and midwifery, crucial for achieving Universal Health Coverage.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the health care system and its workforce, the majority of whom are women, thus hampering the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and Universal Health Coverage, including through the strengthening of primary health care.

During the COVID-19 pandemic protection measures, including individual protection equipment, have fallen short: many health and care workers have been infected with the virus, have lost their lives and decent work measures have been compromised.

Following this, the EU and its Member States call for a clear consensus on guidance and necessary actions on the health and care workforce, and invite the WHO to encourage all stakeholders to invest in the health and care workforce and their working conditions, education, training, security and workers' health promotion.

Thank you.