

**Statement of the Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories,
Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, Mr. Mikheil Sarjveladze at the 77th World
Health Assembly on agenda item 3**

Honourable Director General, Distinguished delegates

It is my privilege to address you on behalf the Ministry of IDPs from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social affairs of Georgia. We welcome the consolidated report presented by the Director-General and would like to reaffirm our continuous commitment to achieving universal coverage with quality health services for all.

Health as a precondition for sustainable societal and economic development of the country remains the Government's top political priority. Since the inception of the Universal Health Care Program in 2013, substantial success has been achieved in ensuring population coverage with state-funded health benefits. Over the past 2 years, reforms implemented by the Government in pharmaceutical sector, including price regulation and managed entry agreement mechanisms enabled us to fully eliminate financial barriers to chronic disease management and cancer drugs.

Given the significant burden of non-communicable diseases, recent governmental strategies focus on tobacco control, promoting physical activity, and encouraging healthy lifestyles. Challenges experienced during Covid pandemic have triggered integrated efforts towards health system strengthening and health security. National stakeholders and global partners have made increasing investments in building capacity of emergency medical services and state-owned hospitals, upgrading public health laboratories and primary health care units. Georgia has increasingly been integrating environmental health into public health strategies. Work is underway on strengthening chemical biomonitoring.

We recognize that success of the UHC program depends on skilled and motivated health care workers. Earlier this year, the parliament endorsed a new legislation on nurses and midwives, promoting a key role of these professions for better addressing patients' needs.

Technical assistance provided by WHO and other international partners has been one of the key success factors throughout the Universal Health Care reform. Addressing antimicrobial resistance, elimination of viral hepatitis and pandemic preparedness are key areas for this collaboration.

Georgia remains committed to creating inclusive, sustainable, and resilient health system that contributes to a society in which every individual can achieve their highest potential for health and well-being.

I thank you for your attention!