



THE PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UN GENEVA

WHA77 – Statement by H.E. Christopher Grima, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malta, under Item 3: the General Debate / Discussion

Geneva, 28 May 2024

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Director General,
Distinguished colleagues,

Malta aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Belgium on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

First, let me thank DG Tedros and the WHO for their untiring efforts in tackling global public health challenges. Malta commends WHO for its ongoing emergency response efforts and humanitarian assistance initiatives. Malta will continue to offer its support wherever possible.

NCDs must remain high on our agendas including advocacy for an integrated approach extending beyond the health sector.

In this respect, we are exploring ways of optimizing NCD management including through digital health, robotics, and the use of AI, innovative approaches to tackling obesity, and improving access to medicines and medical devices.

Malta's strong focus on prevention includes strengthening primary health care and the expansion of integrated services to meet growing demands. Ongoing mental health



reforms demonstrate our strong commitment to streamline acute mental health care, moving away from institutionalisation with improved community care, and addressing stigma.

The recent launch of a national strategy on dementia is an essential building block for a longer-term health plan for the country.

Malta fully supports the concept of social participation for healthcare and meaningful participation. The COVID-pandemic experience has clearly demonstrated the benefits of empowering civil society in taking ownership and in participating in health care.

We look forward to closing the IHR negotiations as soon as possible, and express our support for consensus for a meaningful Pandemic Agreement to be reached within realistic timeframes, reaffirming Malta's commitment to continue to engage in this process.

Continued investment in infrastructure and human resources is necessary to be able to cope with current and future demands. Like many, Malta continues to need more healthcare workers than we can produce, and we seek sustainable and ethical solutions to address this challenge by also addressing language and cultural barriers, for a better patient safety and experience.

We appreciate WHO's focus and collaboration on climate and health. From lessons learnt last summer during a prolonged heatwave resulting in hospital admissions and deaths, we highlight the importance of national heat-health plans towards the prevention and mitigation of similar occurrences.

Finally, as co-facilitators of the UNGA AMR High Level Meeting on AMR in September 2024, we thank WHO and Member States for your contributions to the process thus far



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and ask for your continued engagement and support towards a meaningful outcomes-based Political Declaration that will make a difference going forward.