

Agenda item 15.4

Climate change, pollution and health – Written statement Switzerland, 30 May 2024

We are at a crucial point in time as **climate change is emerging as one of the greatest health challenges of our time**. Air pollution notably from fossil fuels is aggravating **the triple planetary crisis** of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and having devastating impact on human health. In order to cope with these global challenges, including climate change, we need to strengthen **the global health security architecture** with a strong World Health Organization (WHO) at the center of it.

Switzerland therefore **welcomes the resolution on climate change and health that was adopted during the WHA77**. It will help to strengthen cooperation and global action.

Switzerland also **welcomes the adoption of the GPW 14** – that also includes climate change as a key priority – recognizing that the climate crisis is also a health crisis.

We couldn't agree more that urgent action needs to be carried out to address **the interlinkages between health and the environment and enhance the engagement of the health sector and the WHO** in leading and supporting existing efforts to address the health risks and impacts of environmental issues, including through a human rights lens.

Switzerland **welcomes the Consolidated report by the Director-General on the 'Impact of chemicals, waste and pollution on human health'** and are pleased to note that Executive Board members expressed during their 154th session support for the options described in the report EB/154 for involvement of WHO in the intergovernmental science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals, waste and prevent pollution (SPP) and the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) to develop an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

Switzerland **welcomes and fully supports WHO' involvement in the Science-Policy-Panel. In particular**, we support all technical and administrative support of WHO for the Panel. We recognize that the funding of the Science-Policy-Panel will be voluntary and additional to existing WHO initiatives.

With regards to the INC process to develop a legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, **it is crucial that the protection of human health is fully embedded in the legal obligations across the full life cycle of plastic**. The health community can bring a wealth of expertise on many areas relevant to the plastic treaty and need to be better reflected in the negotiations but also for the future implementation of the treaty. We welcome the engagement of the WHO in this process and hope it will be strengthened notably in view of INC5.

To conclude, Switzerland **reaffirms the crucial role that WHO** can play in general for a comprehensive, coherent, effective and efficient international regime toward the sound management of chemicals and waste. We therefore welcome that the discussion will be carried on with the scheduled discussion on the Global Framework on Chemicals, which was recently adopted in Bonn, Germany, for the 78th World Health Assembly in 2025.