



Statement of Ireland 79th World Health Assembly

Agenda Items 12.4

National Statement on UHC

21 May 2026

**Honourable Chair,
Distinguished Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,**

[Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered by Cyprus on behalf of the European Union and its 27 MS]

We reaffirm our strong commitment to Universal Health Coverage as a cornerstone of equitable, resilient and sustainable health systems.

We remain firmly committed to advancing Universal Health Coverage, and securing better access to safe, affordable and quality health services and commodities for those who need it most, including women and children and communities affected by conflict and humanitarian disaster.

Chair,

The resolution on Rare diseases: a global health priority for equity and inclusion adopted last year recognises rare diseases as a major global health challenge. It

urged member states to integrate them into national health plans, improve diagnosis and treatment access, and promote social inclusion.

A key outcome is for the WHO to develop a comprehensive 10-year global action plan by 2028 with measurable targets and an accountability framework.

As many rare diseases often affect small patient populations, international cooperation is crucial for sharing knowledge, expertise and resources.

Ireland believes that collaboration on the global level is imperative to drive innovation, enable early diagnosis and improve management, treatments, and outcomes for Persons Living with a Rare Disease (PLWRD).

In conclusion Chair,

Achieving Universal Health Coverage is fundamental to the right to health, building on resilient health systems and strong primary healthcare. Equity must remain at its centre, and this includes sexual and reproductive health and rights, and ensuring that all health systems are inclusive, resilient and responsive to the needs of all people, at all times.

Thank you.