



Statement of the South Centre to the 77th WHA

Agenda Item 3

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

The South Centre, the intergovernmental organization of 55 developing countries, is pleased to address this WHA.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda is a global collective commitment and responsibility. The slow pace of progress on the SDGs, including on the Goal 3 on good health and well-being, means that we are failing on the promise of not leaving anyone behind. We call on all countries to redouble efforts to meet the SDGs.

This 77th Health Assembly will decide on a new general programme of work. We support that universal health coverage and strengthening health systems, with strong primary health care systems, must underpin the 14th general programme of work. The WHO should strive to work in synergy across programmes and on transversal issues, including on the silent pandemic of antimicrobial resistance, and addressing the social, political and economic determinants of health.

We support efforts to provide WHO with sustainable financing. In addition, the WHO must be empowered as the only true multilateral agency on global health to act as the coordinator agency, in a highly fragmented global health architecture. We hope that the investment round will successfully raise new funding for WHO core work. This must be accompanied by ensuring that the institution can preserve its public character and global public health priorities determined by the Member States. Attention must be given to managing potential conflict of interests and skewed programme budget allocation driven by donors and to the modalities of engagement with private actors.

We are deeply concerned by the continued conflict, forced displacement, rising deaths and worsening health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, and call for an immediate ceasefire.

This 77th Health Assembly has the crucial task to decide on a new way forward in the negotiations on the amendments to the International Health Regulations and a pandemic treaty. Success is to be measured by the end result, not whether a deadline is met. A new mandate for both processes must bring equity as an outcome to the forefront. Fair global rules must be established to strengthen capacities, collaboration, sharing technology and know-how, and fast production and equitable allocation of medical products and surge financing during pandemics. The adoption of a treaty

under article 19 of the WHO Constitution will only make sense if meaningful binding provisions are included that can avoid the repetition of the gaps and failures of the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We wish all Member States a successful Health Assembly.