

**HIGH LEVEL MINISTERIAL MEETING
HEALTH EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**GENEVA
15 DECEMBER 2016**

SPEAKING NOTE

COMMITMENTS TO ACTION PANEL: STATEMENT

Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

- A few weeks ago the European Commission set out its political priorities to contribute to implementing the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Health is one of the elements that boost human capital.
- Investing in health for growth is a priority for the European Union, with the aim of securing healthy lives for all.
- Everyone should have access to good quality healthcare provided by well-trained health workers, wherever they live and whatever their status.

- We fully support the report from the Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, its ten recommendations and the call for urgent action to invest in the health workforce.
- We will continue to rally support, in cooperation with EU Member States, to implement these recommendations in the European Union.
- A number of actions are underway:
- We are sharing good practices and lessons learned on how to recruit and retain health workers in a competitive labour market. Good working environments are just as important as financial factors play to recruit and retain health workforce staff.
- We are promoting European cooperation to improve health workforce planning and data. We know that our healthcare systems need to get smarter and respond more quickly to new population needs. Ensuring the right number of health workers with the right skills mix is key to this.

- To continue to build EU capacity in this important area, next year the European Commission will launch a 1 million EUR project for a new expert network on health workforce planning and forecasting.
- In cooperation with our European and international partners, the Commission will consider all possible solutions – across sectors – to strengthen the health workforce.
- Policy coherence is a priority to address the push and pull factors of health workforce migration and to reduce Europe's reliance on health workers from countries with fragile health systems, in line with the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Workers.
- We are committed to improving the evidence on migration patterns. Next year the EU Health Programme will fund a study with the OECD to analyse recent trends and provide new insights for national and regional policy responses.

- Through our global development programmes and in cooperation with our international partners, we will continue to invest in improving health security and we will continue to work towards achieving Universal Health Coverage in countries worldwide.
- In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, health workforce is, in our view, a key action contributing to the health goal.
- We have committed to regular monitoring, reporting and reviewing progress of our response to the Sustainable Development Goals.
- We are also committed to involve stakeholders in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. We will be setting up a multi-stakeholder platform to exchange on best practices across sectors, at Member State and EU level.
- Next week, on 20 December, we will host in Brussels a high-level policy summit where we will discuss our EU response to the sustainability challenges and how we are delivering on the 2030 Agenda.

- Thank you.

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