

*Chair,*

*Slovakia aligns itself with the related statements and initiatives on behalf of the EU and its member states.*

*We are grateful for the exceptional work of our honorable Regional Director Hans Kluge, the WHO team, the SCRC, and member states. We acknowledge important achievements in predictability and transparency of procedures, efforts and pilot initiatives aimed at enhancing open governance within the WHO European region, including further steps to improve engagement between candidates and member states for deeper, more constructive dialogue and understanding.*

*We extend our congratulations to the selected candidates and to all for this collective achievement and we express our appreciation for each member state's valuable contributions.*

*We also thank the many member states that championed transparency through both informal multilateral and bilateral discussions, which helped to shape this year's positive outcomes in Europe.*

*With reference to the Surveys of Intentions which helped to facilitate a smooth consensual result of several nominations in the recent years, we recommend that future surveys be given even more time and space and start after the RC, early enough to allow even more time post-regional committee session to enable member states adequate opportunity for reflection on these significant decisions.*

*We trust, Dear Regional Director, just reelected with our shared enthusiasm, that under your sound leadership and that of the Director-General, the transparent and effective governance will foster fair participation and mutual learning among member states, ultimately advancing our shared health goals.*

*Health is our common ground and should serve as a bridge to a more peaceful, healthy, and prosperous world for future generations.*

*Thank you*