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## JOINT STATEMENT

*ON BEHALF OF THE SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN HEALTH NETWORK  
AT THE 72<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY*

**DELIVERED BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, LABOR AND SOCIAL  
PROTECTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

**H.E. SILVIA RADU**  
*Geneva, 20 May 2019*



*Your Excellences  
Mister Director-General,  
Mister President,  
Honourable ministers,  
Honourable Ambassadors,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,*

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the **9 Member States of the SEE Health Network**, who have associated themselves with this statement: The Republic of Albania, the Republic of Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the State of Israel, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, Romania and the Republic of Serbia.

SEE Health Network emphasizes the central importance of Universal Health Coverage achievement for everyone and everywhere in the South Eastern Europe Region. Significant contribution to its achievement was the Ministerial Meeting in Tel Aviv in July 2018 under the subject **‘Ensuring Primary health care for ageing population’**. The Meeting highlighted the importance of primary health care which is the cornerstone of all health systems by providing people centred-care. The rise of chronic diseases, non-communicable diseases, mental health and multi-morbidity requires strong Primary Health Care that is essential for sustainable and resilient health systems to be able to meet the needs for health security and emergency preparedness.

I am pleased to share with all my colleagues, that during the last year we continued our efforts related to the strengthening of Primary Health Care by **a follow-up technical meeting held in the fall 2018 in Slovenia**, which reaffirmed the commitments expressed in the ambitious and visionary Declaration of Alma-Ata 1978.

Consequently, SEEHN with the **WHO European Centre for Primary Health in Kazakhstan** build-up a research that will give the opportunity to enrich the findings and analysis of the primary health care systems in the SEE region. This in turn will be used for the preparation of the forthcoming high-level meeting at the UN General Assembly in 2019.

Furthermore, just last week a **TAIEX multi-country workshop on working time and nursing** was organized in Republic of Moldova with the support of European Commission. Nurses are one of the important pillars of the health systems and Primary Health Care in particular. Empowering nurses gives additional resilience through tackling a number of challenges as workforce shortages, health promotion and prevention throughout life-course, aging population, patient commitment to treatment and continuity of care, high quality and cost-effective care and services.

Another dimension, that benefited from SEEHN concentrated efforts, was to strengthen **immunization**. Following the **Statement of Intent** endorsed at the Ministerial Meeting in Podgorica in February 2018, actions have been taken in line with the commitments to the European Vaccine Action Plan (2015-2020). In this light, with WHO support **technical work has been launched to foster relationship between SEE Member States**, partners and stakeholders aimed to the implementation of the joint roadmap for affordable vaccine supply. This was a perfect opportunity again to realize that epidemics do not know about borders and the only way forward is to work together, and deliver together, across the entire SEE Region.

I would like to particularly underline the significance of the SEEHN cooperation with WHO and to spot a major outcome document signed between **WHO European Regional Office for Europe and SEEHN the Sub-Regional Cooperation Strategy for the period 2018-2023**, on 10 July 2018 in Tel-Aviv. This strategic document will boost the regional cooperation in SEE, inter-country and cross-countries health targeted

actions, to promote policies aimed to achieve **universal health coverage and UN 2030 Agenda**.

I would like to use this occasion to express highest gratitude to the World Health Organization, in particular to **Dr. Zsuzsanna Jakab** for her remarkable support to the South-eastern Europe Health Network and to congratulate her for the new position at the WHO global level, wishing her all possible success.

Furthermore, I am delighted to mention **strengthened cooperation of South-eastern Europe Health Network with other partners** and to highlight the commitment of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Health Forum Gastein. The **South-eastern Europe Health Network** believes in strategic partnerships for joint actions that amplify the efforts towards achievement of SDGs.

Finally, I would like to convey sincere appreciation to the **Director General Dr. Tedros**, to express **South-eastern Europe Health Network** support to the achievement of the “**triple billions goals**” and to highlight that ‘one voice’ commitment serves better to the best interest of our populations.

Thank you.