

Thank you Chair.

Dear Director General Dr Tedros,

Dear Regional Director Dr Kluge,

Dear Colleagues Ministers of Health,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like on behalf of the Greek government to express our deepest appreciation to both Dr Tedros and Dr Kluge for their continued support and collaboration during these unprecedented times.

Our work continues to be centred on our commitment to achieving universal health coverage in the country. Our efforts on this front have been far-reaching and were reinforced by the Political Declaration of the High – Level meeting on Universal Health Coverage last year in New York, as well as the Declaration of Astana on Primary Health Care that was adopted in October 2018 in order to leave no one behind.

While we have made great strides in health outcomes globally over the past 40 years, we face many ongoing challenges and COVID-19 has shown to us that we have to rethink our way of operating amidst the pandemic. A primary health care approach is the most effective way to sustainably solve today's health and health system challenges. We are convinced that strengthening primary health care is also the most inclusive, effective and efficient approach to enhance people's mental health that especially during the pandemic is under enormous pressure. There is no UHC without PHC and no Health without Mental Health. These two mottos are NOW MORE RELEVANT THAN EVER BEFORE.

During the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Greece, thanks to the determination of our Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and the guidance of a high-level team of national experts, has timely taken all the necessary measures that effectively slowed down its spread in the country.

In view of the next stages of the pandemic, the Prime Minister, realizing the need to strengthen mental health services, created a vice- ministry that will deal with this issue as well as the further development of the psychiatric reform in the country.

We are finally very pleased to see that the European Programme of Work, developed under the Regional Director Dr Kluge's leadership is so pioneering and comprehensive, including mental health as one of its four flagships and we are reassured about the great impact the EPW will have in our country but also in our region as a whole.

Thank you.