



THE PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UN NEW YORK



Malta
2023-2024

UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL

High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage, 21 September 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Hon. Chris Fearne, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta and Minister for Health

President,

My Brother Dr Tedros,

Colleagues,

Health Care Provision is influenced significantly by social, cultural, economic, political and environmental determinants that are particular and specific to different countries and regions.

Therefore, Health Care Provision, for these very reasons, remains primarily a national competence.

But a sick child is a sick child wherever she may be – be it the global north or the global south, be it a high-, middle- or lower-income country.

And that child – wherever she may be – deserves the best medical care – irrespective of geographical or cultural considerations.

This can only be ensured by international cooperation and solidarity.

Mr President,



Universal, high standard Health Care depends also on the provision of, and access to, effective medicines.

The continued criminal production and distribution of falsified medicines leads each year to the unnecessary misery and death of countless thousands of patients worldwide.

It is time that international bodies tackle this criminal activity – of falsified medicines – effectively and robustly.

The bone fide pharmaceutical industry has a vested interest in eradicating falsified medicines.

Governments and international agencies can and should work with the industry towards ensuring that safe and effective genuine medicines are available where and when they are needed.

Eliminating criminal activity alone will however not suffice. A new procurement, and distribution model of established and innovative, genuine medicines needs to be set up. Patients must not be disadvantaged for living in small market or low-income countries.

Patients in small countries with unique languages are further and especially disadvantaged.



Patient safety dictates that information leaflets are in a language understandable to the end users. This creates further disincentive for the placement of low volume medicines on small markets.

The establishment of electronic labelling with electronic patient information leaflets can address in part this challenge. Malta calls on international regulatory bodies to encourage the development and use of ePILs to increase access, especially in countries or regions with unique languages.

As President of the World Health Assembly, I cannot but be concerned at changing global realities which are negatively impacting global health.

The effects of climate change, the increasing emergence of antimicrobial resistance and the continued and escalating conflicts and wars are threatening to reverse the gains in health care we have achieved over the last decades.

Strong global health leadership has never been so important. The lead that the World Health Organisation is taking in this context is essential and Malta extends its full support to the WHO global and European leadership.

Thank you.