

Madam President

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to amplify some of the messages conveyed by the WHO Director-General at yesterday's opening ceremony. We are combining comments on both scope and function.

WHO supports the proposed Science-Policy Panel having a **broad scope** so that it is policy relevant to addressing the root environmental causes of premature death, disease and injury. Emphasis should be on **prevention where much more attention is needed**

As one of very few health sector participants at this meeting clearly more needs to be done to secure the recognition and relevance of the panel for the health sector.

One thing that health ministries commonly tell us is that the words **chemicals, waste** and **pollution** – do not resonate well the way of their different mandates at country level. Collectively we have worked hard to break down silos between environment and health sectors in their work – this work is much less well developed in relation to **waste and pollution**.

Air pollution, water pollution, food contamination and food borne diseases do have meanings for the health sector – therefore we suggest the **scope clearly speak about preventing the impacts of pollution on human health** – rather than dealing with waste and pollution (per se) as this puts the frame very much at the end of the pipe – and clean-up operations.

As was expressed by several delegations yesterday – WHO shares the view that a discussion of which multilateral instruments should receive policy relevant advice from the panel is NOT part of the discussion of scope. While the secretariat has made an excellent start in mapping existing processes etc in Information document 4 – there are notable gaps in this document including several of particular importance to health – for example inclusion of the International Health Regulations, One-Health approaches and the emerging new pandemic preparedness frameworks – these are three key instruments which are clearly policy relevant particularly in respect to addressing the triple planetary crisis.

There has been some mention of science-policy needs in relation to SAICM and the new plastics treaty being developed. WHO firmly believes all existing process must tackle science-policy issues needed for their own operations. Many cooperative arrangements exist between instruments for cross cutting methodological issues such as those focused on risk assessment methodologies.

The new science policy panel which we are here discussing must have a higher-level perspective – as mentioned by Dr Tedros yesterday – accelerating the implementation of preventive actions at country level would be one such issue that would have policy relevant scope across many existing instruments and this type of thinking would be useful to guide our discussions.

We support the functions set out in UNEA 5/8 as a the basis for further discussion