

UHC2030 Statement at the UN High-Level Meeting on UHC 23/09/19 – made by Professor Ilona Kickbusch, Co- Chair UHC2030

For Panel 1

On behalf of UHC2030, it cannot be stated frequently enough that UHC means that everyone, everywhere should have access to quality and affordable health services. It is clearly a political choice and central to the SDGs. We like to highlight that political decisions beyond health are needed. This is why this HLM is important to draw attention to the political determinants of UHC and the political choices that heads of states and governments need to make often in very controversial political contexts. We have heard from those leaders that have made this choice how it is benefitting their societies and economies.

Governments have the primary responsibility to ensure people's health as a social contract at all levels of development. It means bringing society together as an expression of solidarity between people who have the resources to pay and those who do not, people who are healthy and those who are not, people who are young and people who are old. Globally too it is a social contract because the present level of funding is insufficient. It implies redistribution, social justice and rights, ensuring that the most vulnerable and marginalised groups are included. And it implies that the rights and the contribution of women are fully recognized. This is why the six Key Asks from the UHC Movement call on political leaders to legislate and to invest; and to collaborate with all of society to make UHC a reality for all citizens. We must move together now to implement the historical political consensus this HLM has achieved. The UHC2030 movement will do its utmost to accelerate progress.

For Panel 2

UHC is an affordable dream. We know that it is both technically and financially feasible. What remains to be done? Governance. For example, mobilizing domestic resources to increase public spending needed to achieve UHC is about tax payers' money. Therefore, it is important to ensure people can express their voice in policy making and express how they want their money to be used. Civil society organisations and communities play an important role in amplifying individual voices and connecting political leaders, policymakers and providers to the communities they serve, making health services more responsive to the specific needs of different population groups.

Participatory governance and whole of society approaches are part of the UHC road to success. There are a variety of mechanisms for fostering dialogue, which not only empower communities, but also help to hold governments accountable for their commitments. This HLM is a unique opportunity to secure social participation as a core principle of health system reforms. This is why the Key Ask of the UHC movement include a call to establish multi-stakeholder mechanisms for engaging the whole of society. We need to ensure that everyone's voice is heard, particularly the vulnerable and marginalised. This is why another Ask is about strong regulatory and legal environments that are responsive to people's needs. Let's make our power count for UHC.