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Universal Health Coverage passes key global milestone

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WHO welcomes Inter-Parliamentary Union Resolution on UHC



The World Health Organization has recently welcomed a new Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Resolution on achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030. The resolution, adopted at the IPU Assembly in Belgrade, Serbia, comes one month after heads of state agreed a high-level United Nations Political Declaration on UHC in New York.

UHC is increasingly regarded as a cornerstone for sustainable global development as leaders and communities acknowledge that health is both a human right and essential to economic growth.

“Universal health coverage is a political choice. Last month, the world’s leaders signalled their readiness to make that choice. Now it’s time to turn those commitments into health results,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

He added: “Parliamentarians have a vital role to play in making this happen. Because it’s parliamentarians who pass laws and allocate funding. It’s parliaments who, keep government accountable for the commitments it’s made and who forge the partnerships that help countries make universal health coverage a reality.”

Today’s Resolution calls on parliaments and parliamentarians to “take all possible measures to achieve UHC”, stressing the need for robust legal frameworks and the need to allocate adequate resources.

Like the UN declaration, it highlights the importance of assuring strong primary health care – the provision of essential health services at the community level – and strengthening health systems. It also emphasizes the role strong health systems and services play in assuring global health security. Only when the most vulnerable groups can obtain health care, can a country protect its people and ensure that outbreaks do not turn into epidemics. The resolution includes a strong focus on women, children and adolescent health including sexual and reproductive health as a key component of UHC.

The Resolution ends with a request to WHO to work with the IPU and other partners to support the implementation of the resolution at the global, regional and country levels and to monitor progress.

“The resolution highlights the power of the collaboration between IPU and WHO, and builds on the Memorandum of Understanding we both signed in October 2018,” added Dr Tedros.