

144th session of the WHO Executive Board (24 January - 1 February 2019)

Agenda Item:

5.4 Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Statement:

We welcome the opportunity to speak on 5.4.

As a global trade union federation of 30 million public sector workers across 156 countries of which almost half are health and social workers, implementation of the 2030 SDG Agenda is very important to us.

While we note the progress towards health-related SDGs, we are of the view that much more progress will be made with a reform of the global economic architecture. It is not accidental that MS called for a NIEO at the 1978 Alma-Ata conference.

In the period since then, there has been a NIEO, but not one envisaged in Alma-Ata. This neoliberal IEO was the major obstacle to attainment of “Health for All by 2000”. And it currently undermines achievement of the set SDGs.

Cuts in health and social services funding as a result of financial consolidation and the liberalisation of healthcare services delivery due to FTAs are two key factors working against the 2030 SDG Agenda.

As health is a fundamental human right, it should not be in anyway commodified. But without curtailing the might of global health companies who see the health and social sector as essentially an economic factor, it will be impossible to stamp out the marketization of health.

PSI is of the view that we all need to be wary of foundations and CSOs that MNC - who put profit over the health and well being of people - front to advance policy influence in global health.

We however wish to equally state our support for the WHO developing a long-term plan for maximizing its contribution to achievement of the health-related SDG in line with the 13th GPW 2019-23. We are convinced that this would be invaluable for supporting MS, particularly LMIC, to develop more effective approaches to ensuring and delivering universal access to health services, particularly with a sustained drive towards reforming the global economic architecture, including reform of the international tax system to raise the level of funding available for MS to meet the SDG.