

**PHM Statement (speaking as part of the WCC delegation) presented by Chiara Bodini to the 64th session of the World Health Assembly of WHO, on agenda item 11 The future of Financing for WHO**

Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to address the World Health Assembly on behalf of the CMC Churches Action for Health and the People's Health Movement, a global network of organizations and individuals working in more than 80 countries for 'health for all'.

We are committed to a strong World Health Organisation, adequately funded, fully utilising the powers of the Constitution and playing the leading role in global health governance. However, the current crisis could compromise WHO's capacity to play this role.

The report is short on detail. The detailed reform program was only available on the website late last week, and this also lacks specifics on the reforms. We are concerned that the scope of operations of the Secretariat could be reduced with 'mainstreaming' of some important functions and that private foundations and corporates will have new opportunities to influence the WHO agenda through the proposed World Health Forum. While we support innovative mechanisms and consultations and public hearing sessions with public interest groups, we believe that the task of setting WHO's agenda and the decision making process should always remain with the member states.

The role of WHO should not be restricted to a technocratic one distanced from policy issues that have profound implications on the realization of economic development, equity, justice and peace. These are critical determinants of health and are wholly encompassed in the WHO Constitution.

To fulfil its mandate the WHO needs a budget that is adequate, predictable and untied. The growing imbalance between assessed and voluntary contributions undermines the organisation's independence. We propose that member states collectively commit to increasing assessed funding so that it reaches 50% of the overall budget over the next five years. This would help WHO to be more independent of private philanthropies and the corporate sector and thus better serve its member states and people and implement the priorities decided by the assembly.