

## WHO Foundation

### Prof. Thomas Zeltner's Announcement Speech

27 May 2020

Thank you very much Dr. Tedros for welcoming me, and I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this topic. Today is an important day. We are thrilled to announce the creation of the WHO Foundation.

I will briefly address 5 key points about the Foundation:

- First, what is the WHO Foundation?
- Second, why is it needed?
- Third, how will it make a difference?
- Forth, what is the relationship to WHO?
- And finally, what are the next steps?

#### **What is the WHO Foundation?**

The Foundation, is an independent grant-making organization set up under the laws of Switzerland. Its primary mission is to address the most pressing global health challenges of today and tomorrow by raising significant new funding for WHO from non-traditional sources. The Foundation will work with individual major donors, the general public and corporate partners to strengthen the global health ecosystem, by supporting WHO's resource mobilization strategy, broadening WHO's donor base and supporting its 5 year strategy, also known as the General Programme of Work.

#### **1) Some may ask why is the WHO Foundation needed?**

The creation of the Foundation represents a truly innovative approach to diversifying WHO's resource mobilization strategy. This new approach is clearly an urgent need as illustrated by the tremendous response of donations that the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund has received these past two and a half months. The COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund will continue its vital work. While pandemic preparedness and response will also be one of the areas that the WHO Foundation will focus on, the Foundation's mission is much broader and will cover all areas of global public health in which WHO is working. We will do this by supporting global public health needs, from prevention, mental health, and non-communicable diseases, and as mentioned, to emergency preparedness, and health system strengthening.

#### **2) How will the Foundation make a difference?**

The WHO Foundation will enhance and complement the global health ecosystem by providing agility and flexibility in receiving charitable contributions and grantmaking, accelerating WHO led evidence-based interventions, and focusing on high impact interventions and partnerships.

We will maintain close ties with WHO to ensure synchronization, support and complementarity in all areas. All funding of the WHO Foundation will help implement WHO's General Programme of Work; on average between 70% to 80% of the funds we raise will go directly to the WHO Secretariat. The remaining 20-30% will be used to strengthen public health globally, by working with implementing partners of WHO.

### **3) What is the Foundation's relationship to WHO?**

The WHO Foundation is an independent legal entity formed under the laws of Switzerland. The name is being licensed on a revocable basis in accordance with terms and condition stipulated in an agreement between WHO and the Foundation. The WHO Foundation has been established by me as Swiss citizen in the Canton of Geneva in close collaboration with WHO and supported by an independent philanthropic consulting firm.

WHO will maintain close links with the Foundation. In this regard, the Director General will designate a representative to attend Foundation Board meetings as an observer. WHO will also periodically report to Member States on its interactions with the Foundation and funds received from it. All funding from the WHO Foundation to WHO will be fully aligned with the Program Budget decided by Member States and given as flexible and predictable as possible.

### **4) What are the next steps for the Foundation?**

While we have established the possibility to receiving donations now under [www.whofoundationproject.org](http://www.whofoundationproject.org), we currently are in the process of forming a secretariat for the Foundation and are starting with the search and selection of a CEO. In addition, we are in the process of expanding the Board to include prominent and diverse personalities from all WHO regions.

I am very honored to be the founder of this initiative, thank you to Dr. Tedros for this opportunity, for your confidence, and for your support in launching this initiative, which has been in the making for a year and a half in the making, when Dr. Tedros asked me to chair an Advisory Group, whom I would also like to thank very much for their continuous support and guidance.

We very much look forward to engaging with individual major donors, the general public and corporate partners to tailor partnerships with the ultimate goal of supporting SDG3, to help future generations overcome the health challenges of today and thrive tomorrow.

The WHO deserves a strong, independent, external advocate who can support and strengthen its impact on the global health ecosystem, and this Foundation will do just that.

Thank you.