# TALKING POINTS FOR MEETINGS WITH AFRICA (ALL COUNTRIES EXCEPT SOUTH AFRICA, GHANA AND BOTSWANA)[[1]](#footnote-1)

# Pakistan’s candidature for WHO DG

* Pakistan has launched its candidature for WHO Director General.
* The election will be in held in two phases. In January 2017, the 34-member Executive Board of WHO will elect up to three candidates and in May 2017, the 196-member World Health Assembly will elect one.
* Pakistan has adopted a merit based approach to its candidature. Our Candidate, Dr. Sania Nishtar has wide experience. She served as a federal minister, has strong civil society credentials and is experienced in the multilateral system as chair of a WHO commission. She is a Royal College of Physicians qualified physician, a researcher with a Ph.D, and a widely published author and thought leader in global health.
* The Candidature has been welcomed by the OIC during its 13th Summit in Istanbul in April this year
* After the Ebola epidemic, WHO needs a merit based candidate, one with a combination of technical competencies, leadership and accountability credentials. Our candidate’s diverse technical and leadership attributes can be crucial for leading WHO. Her accountability credentials are evidenced by her recent selection by UNSG to chair the UN’s Independent Accountability Panel on Women and Children’s health.
* Geographic considerations favor Pakistan’s candidature as there has never been a WHO DG from the Eastern Mediterranean region. According to the new rules of election, regions which have ever had a DG would be given preference. Dr. Sania Nishtar would be the first Muslim to head WHO, if selected, and could play a major role in portraying a positive and progressive image of the Muslim world
* Two out of the three health agencies in the UN system (UNFPA, and UNAIDS) are already headed by Africans.
* Our candidate has deeply engaged with experts from Africa in her work in the multilateral system, notably, WHO. She has co-authored papers with colleagues from Africa and has served on WHO/UN commissions, task forces, and expert panels with them.
* She is aware of the special needs of Africa and accords high attention to them. For example, in her capacity as co-chair of the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity she was instrumental in hosting a consultation especially in Africa to better understand their problems.
* As Sania Nishtar is from a developing country background and has worked there, she understands the African perspective well and can be more responsive to Africa’s needs.

1. There are separate talking points for South Africa, Ghana and Botswana [↑](#footnote-ref-1)