# TALKING POINTS FOR MEETINGS WITH SRI LANKA

# 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 engaged with experts and government officials from Sri Lanka in her work in the multilateral system, notably, WHO.
* In 2009, she was invited by the government of Sri Lanka to speak in the plenary session of the South Asian Regional Ministerial Meeting in support of the 2009 Economic and Social Council’s Annual Ministerial Review. She has conducted joint WHO studies with Sri Lankan researchers and has visited Sri Lanka on Several occasions.
* She has co-authored numerous papers with colleagues from South Asia and has served on commissions and task forces with them. Her Ph.D thesis was on South Asian Coronary risk, so she is deeply familiar with the ethnic similarities in south Asia. She engaged with the SAARC Cardiac Society early in her career and her first book was about preventing heart disease in South Asia.
* Pakistan and Sri Lanka have a strong multifaceted relationship and recognize the importance of co-operation in the field of health and medicine in the context of bilateral relations. The Government of Sri Lanka has further enhanced the existing bilateral relations, friendship and cooperation between the two countries to improve health services for the current and future through an MoU in the signed in January 2016 and under process for implementation. This (MOU) aims to exchange information about health programs, exchange of experts in order to realize short-term education and training, to promote the improvement of professional skills, providing direct contact among the related government institutions, organizations and other kinds of cooperation in the field of therapeutic good and public health.
* Your support for Pakistan’s candidature will further strengthen our relationship