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1 April 2017

Re: Candidacy of Dr. Sania Nishtar, SI, FRCP, Ph.D, for Secretary-General, World Health Organization

To All with Interest in the WHO:

On learning of the candidacy of my friend Dr. Sania Nishtar for the position of Director-General of the World Health Organization, I am very pleased for her, for the WHO, and for the cause of global health which both represent.

I had the opportunity to collaborate closely with Sania following her establishment of Heartfile, the pivotal NGO dedicated to improvement of health systems in Pakistan. She had undertaken development of the *National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases and Health Promotion in Pakistan*, at a time when we were completing our corresponding public health action plan on heart disease and stroke prevention for the US, in the early 2000s.

At Sania's invitation, we joined in a fruitful collaboration culminating in release of the *National Action Plan* in 2004, in a ceremony presided over by the First Lady of Pakistan, which I was privileged to attend. Throughout this development, I was able to observe and appreciate Sania's strong initiative, broad perspective, and sharp focus on practical lines of action through which the Plan could be implemented and evaluated.

As I have followed Sania's career subsequently, she has continued to manifest these critical qualities and gained truly vast experience leading to her nomination for this position of world-wide importance.

She has served as leader or member of numerous national, regional, and global health organizations, commissions, and congresses addressing a broad array of health issues as illustrated, for example, by her roles as Federal Minister, Government of Pakistan (with portfolios on Education and Training, Science and Technology, Information Technology and Telecommunications, and Health); Chair of the UN Secretary General's Independent Accountability Panel for the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health; and Co-Chair of the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity.

Sania's experience reflects both widespread recognition and demand for her contributions of insight, leadership, and diplomacy and deep personal commitment to the health concerns of people everywhere. Her tireless efforts and exemplary accomplishments have been recognized throughout her career, from her unequalled record of performance at Khyber Medical College in the 1980s to receipt of the Rockefeller Foundation's Global Innovation Award in 2011.



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These few examples are drawn from a rich and diverse record of achievements which illustrate consistently Sania's qualities of initiative, perspective, practical focus, insight, leadership, and diplomacy – all attributes of critical importance to the role of Director-General of the WHO and the cause of global health.

It is truly fortunate, and highly promising, that so exceptionally qualified a person as Sania Nishtar stands as a candidate for this position.

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