

**STATEMENT for UNFCCC SBSTA/SBI 56 – OPENING PLENARY**

Climate change is an important environmental determinant of health. Stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations is essential for a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, including for clean air, water security, and food security and nutrition.

Elevated levels of greenhouse gas impact the health and wellbeing of humans and all other species with whom we co-exist. These impacts are broad, and include heat stress, respiratory disease, increased prevalence of infectious and non-communicable disease, malnutrition, and emergencies linked to increased strength and frequency of natural hazards.

Climate change is an environmental crisis and a threat to health.

The WHO commends the progress made at COP 26 to accelerate efforts towards phasedown of unabated coal, phaseout of fossil fuel subsidies, and a transition towards low-emission energy systems.

If implemented, these mitigation efforts will contribute to positive health outcomes, including reducing the risk for respiratory illness and associated conditions, such as cardiovascular disease and stroke, worldwide.

However, more ambition and a phase out of fossil fuels is needed.

During the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of Subsidiary bodies, WHO urges Parties to negotiate for outcomes that will promote health and wellbeing and disease prevention.

The Paris Agreement – an environmental agreement – is also a critical public health agreement. In the lead up to COP 27, WHO urges its Member States, and Parties to the UNFCCC, to acknowledge the significant impact that environmental degradation has on global mortality by including reference to health in COP 27 outcomes. Specifically, we propose that chapeau text of a COP 27 outcome document:

*Recognize that stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations will promote health and positive health outcomes for people and planet.*

The WHO encourages environmental ministries to build a common dialogue with health ministries and encourages UNFCCC Parties to mobilize action on health at global, regional, and national levels to implement the UNFCCC as a component to public health strategy.