Medicus Mundi International statement for the UN-HLM on
Universal Health Coverage, 23 September 2019

We congratulate governments for their political commitment to achieve UHC by 2030. We support the emphasis on PHC as a cornerstone for integrated health systems and on addressing the global shortfall of 18 million health workers. We applaud the focus given on regulation, legislation and political leadership beyond health, including the need for international solidarity and cooperation. Nevertheless, we draw your attention to two elephants in the room.

1. The “multi-stakeholder” paradigm in the UHC discourse tends to disguise the adverse impact of financialisation, privatisation and commercialisation of health services on health equity. We insist on the responsibility and leadership of governments as main duty bearers. We call for strong public systems for both health care financing and delivery.

2. MMI calls for development cooperation that supports and accelerates democratic health policies and systems. However, international cooperation is often not aligned with national public health priorities. This agenda is captured by the political and economic interests behind development finance, including the commercialisation of health care and the securitisation of health as a global risk. The international solidarity called for is not matched by concrete international public finance required to attain UHC in low-income countries. A critical reflection is much needed.

Length: 200 words

Speaker, if selected:
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