

His Excellency Csaba Kőrösi
President of the 77th Session
United Nations General Assembly
405 East 42nd Street
New York, NY, 10017

May 9, 2023

Re: Multi-stakeholder Hearing on Universal Health Coverage

The International Association for Dental Research, representing over 10,000 researchers worldwide and the FDI World Dental Federation representing over 1 million dentists worldwide thank the Chair for the opportunity to present this statement. Oral health is essential to a person's overall health and well-being yet oral health coverage is often divorced from UHC and the rest of the health care delivery systems in many countries. It is important to note that health systems without oral health fail on the health system performance dimensions of equity, quality, responsiveness, efficiency and resilience. Therefore, health system strengthening for UHC must include oral health care services and financing mechanisms that reimburse oral disease prevention and treatment. This is also essential for the success of the recently adopted Global Oral Health Resolution at the 2021 WHO World Health Assembly (WHA 74) and the Draft Global Oral Health Action Plan due for adoption at the 76th World Health Assembly.

To achieve UHC, we urge governments to integrate oral health and oral health research into national UHC agendas. To reduce current catastrophic health expenditures, it is critical that UHC agendas i). integrate essential oral health services and the basic package of oral care within primary care , ii). create an oral health workforce geared towards population health needs and the social determinants of health and iii). include financial protection and dental care coverage in health insurance packages.

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