1. Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. In recent decades, our Region has made great progress in public health improvements such as enabling more people to live longer and healthier lives.

3. I would like to emphasize – with population ageing, good health is a prerequisite for a productive society and sustainable development.

4. Good health is the foundation of well-functioning societies, communities, and families.

5. As demonstrated during the Covid-19 pandemic, people’s health and well-being are much more relevant to the 2030 Agenda than ever.

6. When we look to the future, there are shared concerns that unite countries to work together, including non-communicable diseases and the profound implications of rapid population ageing.
7. To address our concerns and meet future challenges, countries are recommended to develop a long-term agenda for and take action on transforming health and social systems.

8. The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing is an opportunity to bring about transformative change and improve the health and wellbeing of older people.

9. Population ageing is not a challenge but an opportunity, as good health yields high returns from a human, social and economic perspective.

10. Healthy ageing is vital to the progressive realization of the rights of all older people to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health.

11. Investing in healthy ageing and creating more social participation opportunities for older people, can mitigate health spending and improve people’s ability to contribute to society.

12. Fostering healthy ageing requires reorienting the health system from a single-disease episode focus, towards services which “accompany” people throughout their lives, grounded in community-based integrated care, building on existing primary health care.

13. Addressing social determinants of health is similarly important, as health is significantly affected by various factors outside the health system.

14. We should amplify innovations in technology, social entrepreneurship and grounds-up solutions, which can accelerate our progress towards healthy ageing.
15. For instance, connecting the health sector and other relevant sectors through social prescribing can support communities to tailor services and meet the needs and preferences of older people.

16. As our society is increasingly digitalised, digital inclusion is an emerging social determinant of health. Supporting digital inclusion could have positive effects on optimising other social determinants and advancing health and wellbeing into older age.

17. Stronger multisectoral partnerships and a decade of concerted action can create healthy environments and more opportunities that enable people to do what they value throughout their lives.

18. WHO is working with countries to transform health and social systems towards healthy ageing.

19. Thank you for your attention.