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## Merck Applauds Adoption of Universal Health Coverage Declaration

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[Company Statements](#)

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Merck (known as MSD outside the U.S. and Canada) believes that all people should have access to quality and effective essential healthcare. That is why Merck stands with the global health community to applaud the adoption of the political declaration *Universal health coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World*.

Today at least half of the world's population lack access to essential health services and out of pocket health expenses drive almost 100 million people into poverty each year.<sup>[i]</sup> In low and middle income countries where the challenge is especially pronounced, the low quality of the health services and products that are available may result in suboptimal care and adverse events, and may deter patients from seeking healthcare.<sup>[ii]</sup> A new approach to bringing health coverage to everyone is needed. Measurable investments and acceleration of initiatives to promote access to quality healthcare globally are critical to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), a cornerstone of the Sustainable Development Goals, by 2030.<sup>[iii]</sup>

No single organization or sector can achieve UHC on its own. This endeavor will require a diversity of resources, knowledge, and experience, and establishing meaningful partnerships among stakeholders. The private sector will be a key partner for achieving UHC.<sup>[iv]</sup>

For more than a century, Merck has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases. We are proud to be a steadfast global health ally to governments, international organizations and other partners serving patients in need. Our people work relentlessly to strengthen healthcare systems, ensure product quality, reinforce supply chains, and enable access to our medicines in low resource settings through differential pricing, product donations and financial assistance programs.<sup>[v]</sup> To cite a few examples:

- Since 1987, our donation program for river blindness has been helping partners roll back this debilitating tropical disease [\[link\]](#)
- Merck for Mothers works with private sector partners to streamline quality standards and tools for maternity care, integrating those standards into quality assurance systems [\[link\]](#)
- We have robust access programs to expand the reach of our vaccines and our medicines for HIV and family planning [\[link\]](#)
- Our investments into research and development look to a future of even better ways to prevent and treat disease worldwide [\[link\]](#)
- We work with a range of partners to advance an ecosystem that enables our innovations to reach those who need them [\[link\]](#)
- We are a founding member of Access Accelerated, a cross-industry effort to improve prevention, treatment and care for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in low- and middle-income countries. [\[link\]](#)

Private sector investments into UHC will have the most impact when supported by regulatory and legal systems that set ethical frameworks, ensure quality of health products and services, accelerate access and recognizes the value of these health products and services, promote responsiveness and inclusiveness of all stakeholders, and support the incentives for future innovation. Public sector stakeholders can catalyze contributions from other partners by prioritizing health through policy tools, enhanced budget allocations, and appropriate financing targets that minimize out-of-pocket payments by patients.

Merck congratulates the World Health Organization and the governments of the world and other

dedicated stakeholders for their unwavering commitment to these principles and goals as laid out in the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage. We pledge to continue our work saving and improving the lives of patients all over the world by serving as a dedicated partner in global health to achieve and sustain Universal Health Coverage.

## About Merck

For more than a century, Merck, a leading global biopharmaceutical company known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to advance the prevention and treatment of diseases that threaten people and communities around the world - including cancer, cardio-metabolic diseases, emerging animal diseases, Alzheimer's disease and infectious diseases including HIV and Ebola. For more information, visit [www.merck.com](http://www.merck.com) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

## Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the "company") includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company's ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company's patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2018 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site ([www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)).

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[i] United Nations, 2019, Political Declaration, Universal health coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World

[ii] Kruk et al. 2019, Mortality due to low-quality health systems in the universal health coverage era: a systematic analysis of amenable deaths in 137 countries. *Lancet*. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)31668-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)31668-4/fulltext)

[iii] United Nations, 2019, Political Declaration, Universal health coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World

[iv] Need a source for this stat. It comes from the UHC2030 PSC Joint statement

[v] <https://www.msdrresponsibility.com/>

## Language:

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