Statement to the 76th Regional Committee for South-East Asia

Agenda Item: 8.3 - Annual report on monitoring progress on UHC and health-related SDGs

World Obesity Federation welcomes the UHC Political Declaration and discussions of the Regional Committee today, however, we remain concerned by the lack of progress to achieve UHC by 2030, and to meet NCD, and SDG targets. Comprehensive action and investment in obesity is vital for both,

Obesity, like other NCDs, requires prevention, management, and treatment – and financing to make all of these a reality. People living with obesity struggle to get a diagnosis and access care from trained healthcare professionals, thanks in part to absence of training and prioritisation of obesity in health and food systems, leading to significant costs for treatment. 1 billion people globally are estimated to be living with obesity by 2030, thus obesity services are increasingly essential.

The need for equitable access to a continuum of care from health promotion and disease prevention to diagnosis, treatment and management of obesity as part of UHC was recognised in the WHO recommendations on obesity, adopted last year. We urge that the bold ambitions of the UHC Political Declaration be matched by action to ensure that overweight and obesity are part of essential care and within health systems that are equitable and accessible to all who need them.