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H. E. Mr. David Sergeenko
Minister of Labour, Health and Social Affairs
Georgia

Dear Excellency, Dear Minister Sergeenko,

I am writing to you with information that I hope will be of use as your government decides who to support in the election for the World Health Organization (WHO) Director General on 23 May 2017. The next Director General takes the helm at a time when Member States seek to re-establish WHO's position as the trusted leader for securing good health for all the world's people.

If I am elected I will seek to ensure that the WHO always serves the Ministers of Health and the people of all nations by being relevant and responsive to their needs. WHO has achieved a great deal over the years but, like all multilateral organizations, it must continuously revitalize its operations and renew its systems for managing resources in order to optimize the impact that it achieves. I would like to see intensified working relations between the Secretariat – at country, regional and global levels – and the Member States.

I would also like to see emphasis on WHO's specific role in setting standards for people's health and monitoring progress. WHO's main contributions should be to support health ministers in enabling all people to access health care, to maintain defenses against infectious diseases (in ways that take account of Anti-Microbial Resistance) and to lead society-wide efforts that prevent non-communicable disease.

I am a medical doctor who has served in more than 50 countries, working with many different communities, engaging with health professionals and supporting local and national officials. I have led on international responses to malaria, food insecurity, malnutrition, influenza and Ebola. I have championed efforts to support communities and nations to be resilient in the face of changing climates. I have served as leader, partner and adviser, bringing together different organizations, managing complex operations (including crisis response), mobilizing finance and driving institutional change where needed.

I believe that of the three nominated candidates I am best placed to lead WHO into the future.

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Whilst we often talk of global challenges when we talk about health for all, it is at the local and national levels that the greatest improvements in health can be achieved. I believe priority should be given to the specific needs of countries and their people, with a focus on maximising the capability of local and national personnel. The multilateral system can help secure additional support where resources are insufficient and WHO should undertake advocacy to that end.

In offering to serve as Director General I commit to respond impartially to the needs of all peoples, countries and regions. I will exercise leadership in a collaborative way that emphasizes synergy of action: the objective is that all people achieve good health and have equitable access to quality health care (including necessary medicines and surgical services). I will draw on my many years' experience as a committed leader in the multilateral system where I have constantly learned from all with whom I work. Indeed, sharing experiences with others fuels my passion for the health and well-being of all people - especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable. I am committed to respect for human rights, honesty, transparency and accountability and would ensure those values are at the heart of my service to WHO.

On May 23, the Director General will – for the first time – be elected by all Member States. I respectfully invite you to consider the information in this letter as you decide who you would wish to be the WHO's Director General.

In all my work, I recall the challenges faced by the people with whom I worked in my early life, asking myself whether my actions would benefit them and their peers. I sometimes say that I have been training to be WHO Director General all my life: I am ready, now, to lead WHO into the future.

My campaign intensified at the time of the Executive Board in January 2017. Despite an extensive travel schedule I have not been able to visit Georgia. However, I was delighted to hear that your government was willing to offer support to my candidacy.

I do hope to hear more from you on your countries' concerns and priorities for the future of global health and hope we can collaborate in the future. Time permitting; I would greatly value the chance to speak with you at your convenience.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, and warm regards,

David N. Nabarro
United Kingdom Nominee for WHO Director-General, 2017