

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



PRIME MINISTER

Islamabad
24 March 2017

Dear President Giorgi Margvelashvili,

I am writing to seek your kind support for Pakistan's candidate for the position of Director-General, World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Sania Nishtar, who has recently been shortlisted by the WHO Executive Board, along with two other candidates.

It is important for me to share with you that my decision to launch Pakistan's candidature was inspired primarily by the high priority I have always attached to human health and wellbeing. I have the satisfaction of having introduced a number of public healthcare initiatives in Pakistan since assuming office in 2013, ranging from a targeted programme for the poorest of the poor suffering from serious ailments requiring high-cost treatment to a broader state funded insurance cover for families who cannot otherwise afford it. Where my experience with these programmes motivated me to contribute more meaningfully towards achieving the global sustainable development agenda, it also sensitised me on how critically important it is for us, as world leaders, to select people with the right vision to lead our international agencies, as this can cascade our policy intentions much beyond our sovereign confines.

During this process, I also became more aware of the sobering challenges faced today by WHO and the imperative for its next Director-General to possess strong credentials in terms of leadership, education, experience, and a sense of responsibility to the international community. And it is within this context that I decided, after very careful consideration, to nominate Dr. Sania Nishtar as Pakistan's candidate for this position. Dr. Nishtar's successful shortlisting is, indeed, a recognition of her merit and strong credentials.

Dr. Nishtar has all-round experience as an internationally respected civil society leader, former cabinet minister, thought leader, and technical expert. She is a widely published scholar in the field of public healthcare systems and reform. But beyond her erudition in global health is another set of attributes centred on her pro-reform, accountability and transparency credentials, which make her ideally positioned to lead WHO at a critical point in the history of global health. Her selection by the UN Secretary General to chair the UN's Independent Accountability Panel on women and children's health is indicative of her accountability



credentials. Her transparency and pro-reform approach to leadership during her tenure as Pakistan's federal minister is well recognised. Additionally, WHO is undergoing an agenda realignment to conform with the SDGs, which is where Dr. Nishtar has an advantage since the new areas of focus are areas of her expertise. Also, given her civil society background, Dr. Nishtar is well positioned to lead the organisation at a time when there are calls for a WHO more open to civil society organisations. Furthermore, she has recently navigated as co-chair one of the most difficult WHO Commissions – on Childhood Obesity – to fruition, managing complex public-private interactions and building consensus.

As members of a comity of nations, we have a responsibility to work for global welfare, based on considerations that transcend our national domains. Fostering the right leadership at international organisations is one of the important means of fulfilling this responsibility. I am confident that Pakistan can count on your support, and earnestly hope that Dr. Nishtar would receive your country's vote during the next round of election in May 2017.

Excellency, I take this opportunity to convey to you warm regards and the assurances of my highest esteem and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

(Muhammad Nawaz Sharif)

H.E. Mr. Giorgi Margvelashvili,
President of Georgia,
Tbilisi.