

*Mr. President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*This is a historical day. Belgium is convinced that the visionary ambition that we share in the fight against antimicrobial resistance will be a success only if all Member States decide together to adopt a multi-sectorial policy, adapted to the reality.*

*Data speak for themselves : antimicrobial resistance is a major world problem and is a risk for human development. Access to quality medicines is an essential condition for antimicrobial resistance. Therefore, access to quality medicines must be a priority in our policies.*

*We should maintain a high level of action and investment. We should also intensify our efforts to develop innovative actions. In this regard, the Declaration that we are going to sign is an important step forward.*

*Belgium supports the central role of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) within the UN system for global and national coordination response to antimicrobial resistance. This role is crucial and should definitely be retained, if not enhanced.*

*The use of existing governance structures in the United Nations such as the Global Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System of the WHO should be preferred, rather than the creation of a new specific fund or agency to respond to antimicrobial resistance.*

*If we want to effectively fight antimicrobial resistance, it is essential that we opt for a policy that includes a quality assurance approach of all antimicrobials, a systemic and integrated one.*

*1) a quality assurance approach to all antimicrobials. The use of under-dosed and low-quality medicines is indeed a significant cause of antimicrobial resistance, though often forgotten or neglected. In this context, each Member State should fulfil its responsibilities, especially by strengthening national regulatory authorities in order to remove low-quality medicines from the whole supply chain and market. This measure should be supported by a strict international framework. The WHO Prequalification Programme has already shown that it was possible to influence the market towards more quality.*

*2) a systemic and integrated approach that promotes prevention and early diagnosis of infections, and that incentivizes appropriate prescription, use and compliance of antimicrobials through an integrated health care system.*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

*The fight against drug resistance becomes a collective political responsibility. Therefore, Belgium is firmly committed to this struggle, which is a*

*priority for our country. The importance that Belgium gives to this issue is reflected in different ways:*

*First, Belgium is aware of the magnitude and of the urgency of the problem and is currently implementing a 2014-2019 National Strategic Plan to fight multi-resistant organisms.*

*Furthermore, Belgium is taking a stance internationally on the quality of pharmaceutical products. Their free flow causes antimicrobial resistance in non-negligible ways. Through its policy of ensuring quality of pharmaceutical products which are in the process of being validated with the WHO's support, Belgium pleads for the inclusion of all essential antimicrobial drugs in the Prequalification Programme of the World Health Organization.*

*Lastly, with its important and R&D oriented pharmaceutical sector, Belgium has already been able to contribute to the fight against drug resistance. By way of example, a new molecule against multi-resistant tuberculosis, a new vaccine against malaria and a diagnostic test of the Zika virus have been developed in Belgium lately.*

*Mr President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*We know that without collective, concerted and immediate action at a global scale the world will lapse into an era in which ordinary infections can become lethal again. Now is the time to show political will in adopting strategies that will allow us to attain the goal that we have set ourselves.*