

Request to Submit a Statement by Accredited Non-State Actors at Sessions of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa

In accordance with Paragraph 15 of the Annex of the Document AFR/RC71/2, accredited non-State actors wishing to make a statement at sessions of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa must submit a request to the External Relations, Partnerships and Governing Bodies Unit (EPG) of the WHO Regional Office for Africa (at the e-mail address: GoverningBodiesAfro@who.int) not later than one week before the start date of the session.

The statement should respect the time and word limits set for statements by non-State actors for the relevant session, as specified in the session's information note disseminated to all participants. The statement should focus on technical issues and should be directly relevant to both the agenda item and to the document prepared for the item. The statement should not raise issues of a political nature that are unrelated to the agenda item and should not contain any inappropriate or offensive reference to Member States. While there should be no reference to any individual Member State or areas of Member States, it is recalled that nomenclature must follow that of the United Nations.

The Chairperson of the Regional Committee decides whether or not to accord the accredited non-State actors the right to make its oral statement during the session in light of its relevance to the discussion, the time constraints or any other reason.

The statement is posted on the website of the WHO Regional Office for Africa for a limited time period as determined by the Secretariat and will not be retained thereafter.

Name and Acronym of the Accredited Non-State Actor (in English, French or Portuguese):

World Heart Federation (WHF)

Date and Title of the Session:

Title: Seventy-Fifth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa (RC75)

Date & Venue: 25 to 27 August 2025, Lusaka, Zambia

Agenda Item (number, title): Pillar 1 - Item 8 – Accelerating Progress in the Health and Well-Being of Women, Children, and Adolescents by Transforming Health Systems in the African Region (Document AFR/RC75/5)

Form of the Statement: ☐ Written ☒ Oral

If in oral form, name and function of the person wishing to read the statement:

Dr. Lilian Mbau, World Heart Federation Advocacy Committee Member

Statement (in English, French or Portuguese):

Honourable Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

Cardiovascular disease is a major cause of death in women globally. In Africa, rheumatic heart disease and hypertension in pregnancy continue to drive preventable maternal deaths, with mortality rates up to ten times higher among affected women. Yet, these conditions are often underdiagnosed and insufficiently integrated into reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health policies.

The World Heart Federation urges Member States to:

- Integrate cardiovascular prevention, diagnosis, treatment - including access to essential medicines such as Benzathine Penicillin G and antihypertensives - into Primary Health Care, UHC packages, and maternal health strategies.
- Prevent CVDs from an early age by limiting exposure to air pollution, tobacco, alcohol, physical inactivity, and unhealthy diets, while addressing commercial determinants of health.
- Equip health workers to manage pregnancy-related complications, including hypertension.
- Implement resolution WHA74.14 on RHD and adopt WHO's new RHD Guidelines.

No woman should die from a preventable cardiovascular condition.

Thank you.

Name: Dr. Lilian Mbau

Position: World Heart Federation Advocacy Committee Member

Date: 14 August 2025