

Ethiopia's Tedros Adhanom elected to top UN health post

23 May 2017 – The World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the United Nations health agency, today elected Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus as the new Director-General of the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)).

“Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was nominated by the Government of Ethiopia, and [will begin](#) his five-year term on 1 July 2017,” WHO said in a statement following the afternoon vote.

Among his previous positions, Dr. Tedros was Ethiopia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and, prior, Minister of Health.

He also served as Chair of the Global Fund and of the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership Board (RBM), where he secured “record funding” for the two organizations and created the Global Malaria Action Plan, which expanded RBM’s reach beyond Africa to Asia and Latin America, according to the UN agency.

The incoming health chief was chosen from amongst three nominees presented to the World Health Assembly, along with David Nabarro from the UK, and Sania Nishtar from Pakistan, in a process that began before September 2016.

Dr. Tedros will succeed Margaret Chan, who yesterday addressed the World Health Assembly for the final time after serving two consecutive five-year terms.

In her final address as head of the organization, Dr. Chan yesterday urged WHO to “remember the people” behind the facts and figures, and took personal responsibility for the WHO’s delayed response in 2014 to the Ebola outbreak in East Africa.