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GENEVA--The Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, has met with His Holiness Pope Francis to discuss ways to ensure that all people can obtain the healthcare they need, whoever they are, wherever they live.

His Holiness Pope Francis and Dr Tedros have both reiterated that health is a right, and should not be a privilege, and share a commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable and marginalized – in both rich and poor countries.

“I am honoured and humbled to have met His Holiness Pope Francis and to discover that we share so many of the same concerns,” said Dr Tedros.

“For many years, in our previous occupations as well as our current positions, we have both worked to improve the lives of poor and vulnerable people. I am delighted to have Pope Francis’ support for our effort to extend the right of life and health to all people. I particularly welcome the Pope’s emphasis on the welfare of children. I am encouraged to hearÂÂ him say that he is beside us and all those working with us in the attempt to bring health to all, especially the many people, including children, who live on the periphery of society, and who suffer ill health and hunger.”

Pope Francis and Dr Tedros met in Rome in advance of the Global Conference on Primary Health Care, to take place on 25-26 October in Astana, Kazakhstan. The conference marks the fortieth anniversary of the historic Alma Aty Declaration and its commitment to achieve Health For All. Delegates in Kazakhstan will endorse a new declaration to revitalize primary health care around the world.

The goal is to ensure that health care focuses on care for people, rather than simply treatment for specific diseases or conditions – factoring in all aspects of people’s individual lives and situations.

Primary healthcare is at the heart of the global drive to achieve universal health coverage, itself one of the core foundations of the Sustainable Development Goal of better health and wellbeing for all people.

http://www.who.int/news-room/detail/23-10-2018-hh-pope-francis-and-who-director-general-health-is-a-right-and-not-a-privilege