



## EUROPE

### Regional Committee for Europe Fifty-seventh session

Belgrade, Serbia, 17–20 September 2007

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### Resolution

#### **The Millennium Development Goals in the WHO European Region: Health systems and health of mothers and children – lessons learned**

The Regional Committee,

Recalling that the World Health Organization contributed to the elaboration of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and has made a firm commitment to their achievement, and more specifically that *The world health report 2003* highlighted the principles guiding WHO's work in relation to MDGs, and that WHO's commitment to the United Nations Millennium Declaration was reaffirmed at the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly in 2005 by the adoption of resolution WHA58.30;

Recalling that the WHO Regional Office for Europe has promoted a specific strategy on MDGs in the WHO European Region,<sup>1</sup> and that achieving many of the MDGs will require sustained multisectoral action addressing all the determinants of health and the involvement of all partners nationally and internationally;

Welcoming the discussions on the MDGs at the current session of the Regional Committee, during which representatives of the 53 European Member States of WHO have assessed the progress made towards achievement of the goals in their countries and have taken stock of the challenges ahead, while sharing evidence and proposing strategies to promote multisectoral action;

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<sup>1</sup> Document EUR/RC57/8.

Recognizing that strengthening health systems has been considered by the WHO European Member States to be an integral part of the Regional Office's interventions at country level<sup>2</sup> and welcoming the special attention paid to strengthening health systems as a particular approach to implementing programmes that address the health of mothers and children in the WHO European Region;

Recognizing that insufficient capacity in health systems in many countries is a considerable barrier to achieving the health-related MDGs in the WHO European Region, and the need for a better alignment between the health systems agenda in WHO and its various health strategies and programmes for improved effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of WHO's support to countries;

Recognizing that the health of mothers and children concerns particularly the reduction of child mortality (MDG4) and improvement of maternal health (MDG5), and requires political commitment at all levels as well as the awareness and participation of men in their roles as husbands, fathers and guardians;

Having considered the initiative to mobilize international efforts to tackle the challenges identified in the High-Level Forum on the Health MDGs that is being taken forward jointly by WHO and the World Bank, with support from other agencies and global bodies such as the GAVI Alliance and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;

1. COMMENDS the Regional Office on its efforts in promoting achievement of the MDGs in the Region in partnership with other organizations;
2. REAFFIRMS the European strategy on the MDGs as political guidance and strategic direction for Region-wide action in this area;
3. URGES Member States to:
  - (a) substantially scale up activities for achieving the MDGs in accordance with each country's systems and policies, national and subnational needs, circumstances, context and resources;
  - (b) link their efforts to achieve the MDGs, in terms of national goals and priority actions, to the strengthening of health systems in particular by networking vertical programmes and schemes and strengthening national reporting systems;
  - (c) monitor progress in implementing priority actions for all social groups, with particular attention to the poor and disadvantaged, taking account of gender, ethnic and social differences, and addressing gender inequalities and social inequities in health;

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<sup>2</sup> See *Next phase of the WHO Regional Office for Europe's Country Strategy: Strengthening health systems*. Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2005 (document EUR/RC55/9 Rev.1).

4. REQUESTS the Regional Director to continue to ensure that the MDGs are well integrated in the work of the Regional Office and pursued according to the measures outlined in the European strategy by:
- (a) promoting political commitment in Member States;
  - (b) advocating and promoting actions at international level in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, including the European Commission, the World Bank, the Council of Europe, United Nations organizations and nongovernmental organizations;
  - (c) providing Member States with technical support and assistance in capacity-building;
  - (d) stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of knowledge and experience, as well as of novel policy approaches, among countries;
  - (e) strengthening the information system in the Regional Office to monitor the situation of the MDGs and associated health trends;
5. REQUESTS the Regional Director to report to the Regional Committee every two years on the progress made towards the MDGs.