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Draft resolution

Addressing key public health and health policy challenges in Europe: moving forwards in the quest for better health in the WHO European Region

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the report on Addressing key public health and health policy challenges in Europe: moving forwards in the quest for better health in the WHO European Region;¹

Mindful of the shared health challenges described therein;

Acknowledging the progress in health policy made through past initiatives, including Health for All, HEALTH21 and the Tallinn Charter;

Recognizing the continuing need to renew the commitment to comprehensive and coherent health policies and to focus on public health policies, functions and structures, as well as to strengthen European health systems and foster interregional collaboration;

¹ Document EUR/RC60/13

1. AGREES that:
 - (a) a new European health policy inspired by the Organization's Eleventh General Programme of Work 2006–2015 (GPW), taken together with the strengthening of public health policies, strategies, functions and structures, offers an appropriate way to frame cohesive Region-wide action on future health policy;
 - (b) the most effective way to reduce health inequity, tackle health determinants, improve population health and ensure the sustainability of health systems is to pursue an approach based on Health for All, including Health in All Policies, that takes account of sound public health research, evidence-based policy and practice, and a health systems orientation;
 - (c) a common, adjustable framework for national health policies and strategies should be developed with the participation of Member States, to facilitate collaboration among a range of national and international partners and stakeholders;

2. ENDORSES the five avenues identified in the report for addressing key public health and health policy challenges in Europe, as a basis for the Regional Office's proposal to formulate a European health policy embedded in the vision of the new Regional Director, including:
 - (a) fostering partnerships with global, regional and national health actors;
 - (b) improving health through a renewed commitment to strengthening health systems;
 - (c) strengthening public health capacity and services;
 - (d) tackling structural issues in health systems (linkages between public health, health care services and intersectoral action); and
 - (e) carrying out a thorough review of the effectiveness of the public health instruments that are currently available;

3. REQUESTS Member States to collaborate in the development of a European health policy led by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and of a common framework for national health strategies and policies;

4. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
 - (a) to develop a European health policy, as a coherent policy framework, through a participatory process involving Member States, the European Union and other partners (this policy framework will include a vision statement with values and principles as well as targets, goals and objectives and strategies);

- (b) to promote renewed political commitment to the development or renewal of comprehensive national policies, strategies and plans, as a project driven by the Organization's Global Policy Group, and to ensure that WHO works hand in hand with its Member States to support them in their strategic developments to improve health outcomes and strengthen their health systems;
- (c) to develop a renewed focus and rejuvenated commitment to public health capacity, function and services, and to make a real commitment to and investment in prevention and health promotion;
- (d) to maintain a commitment to strengthening health systems (by building consensus, further clarifying, if necessary, the definitions, concepts, functions, and linkages involved, and developing practical tools and instruments for implementation);
- (e) to review the public health tools and instruments for the 21st century;
- (f) in meeting all the above commitments, to work closely with Member States and other partners, and for this reason to further explore with them the possibility of establishing a high-level forum for policy development to guide this process.