

WHO REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

65th Session

Vilnius, Lithuania, 14-17 September 2015

Agenda item 2 (a) – Address by the Regional Director and interim report on the work of WHO in the European Region since the 64th session of the Regional Committee for Europe.

We fully align with the statement made by Luxembourg on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

Italy congratulates the Regional Director for the comprehensive report and agenda prepared and is grateful for Lithuanian hospitality.

The challenges on health sector need to overcome are definitely huge and diverse within the Region.

The world is changing quickly: climate changes and migrants' move, among others factors, are impacting in a way that we must understand, foresee and adapt to. The alternative is the destruction of our lifestyles in the years to come, as we also face an unprecedented economic crisis that challenges our core values of sustainable universal health coverage and access to quality healthcare.

If equity stands as the pivotal value of our discussion and deliberations, we need to promote a brave collaborative network that WHO is in a unique position to advocate for and to lead.

In this respect, Italy endorses and fully supports WHO vision on the several items related mainly, but not exclusively, to migrants' health, NCD prevention and control with a focus on related risk factors, the new challenges of resurgent tuberculosis and AMR, recently addressed also at G7 level, as well as the needed emphasis to immunization coverage. As far as nutrition and food security and safety you all know these are the themes of Milano EXPO 2015, and Italy has enjoyed successful support from WHO and FAO on the matter.

We feel that the issue of health security and our and WHO's capacity to respond properly to incoming crisis are crucial.

The full implementation of the IHR and their systematic review and adaptation to our changing world is fundamental. All Member States must be able or must be assisted to work together in the common framework that WHO has developed. May I underline that many of these items are strictly connected to each other and contribute building our societies and our communities' resilience. A key message that I would like to bring back home is that we have a common vision, we have a common strategy and we commit to act together. This - I believe – is the essence of WHO, this is its scope of work (and what its current reform should strengthen), and this is its added value to all of us.

Thank you Regional Director for your leadership.

