

WHO REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

66th Session

Copenhagen, Denmark, 12-15 September 2016

Agenda item 2 (a) – Address by the Regional Director and report on the work of WHO in the European Region since the 65th session of the Regional Committee for Europe

Highness, Regional Director, authorities, colleagues,

Italy aligns to the Slovak Statement on behalf of the European Union.

Dr. Jakab said that we are living in a time of changes.

I may add in times of fastest changes, and we note that WHO has decided to change accordingly and reform. This highlights the need and ethical obligation for MS to adhere and contribute reforming as well at the same pace.

As nothing is changing faster than our environments and climate (as shown by the unexpected Copenhagen's beautiful weather of these days).

I am pleased to announce that Italy's health theme 2017 G7 will in fact focus on health impacts of climate changes, in full agreement with Regional Director's underlined priorities.

The theme will have two major implications, in line with dr. Jakab's approach.

- 1) Strong political commitment : this must be based on serious intercountry collaboration aiming at integrated implementation of policies, guidelines, frameworks to achieve the impact that WHO , as an honest broker and steward is indicating, but as only full and accountable State's ownership can promote. Our national challenges are the regional priorities and cannot be ignored. They must be faced and joint solutions adopted based on solidarity and collaboration among countries, not only among communities or individuals. Our worst mistake may be neglecting reality and denying evidence, until we are kept in the costly trap of emergency, as in the case of migrations.
- 2) Accountability is critical: WHO should become more accountable, but countries should also become accountable to each other, not only to their own limited national constituencies. We must look at our vulnerabilities in our environments, our societies, our people, our social infrastructures and find shared solutions.

No one left behind is a great slogan, whose prime implication is that no countries and societies must be left behind. This is where WHO's advocacy and added value can play an essential role.

Therefore, we strongly endorse the Regional Director's vision and commit to support her in the challenging path she has indicated and hope the new Headquarters' management will be positively contaminated.