

implementation of the present resolution and on the progress made in establishing efficient transit transport systems in Asia.

5th meeting
18 May 2005

61/12. Regional call for action to enhance capacity-building in public health¹²

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolution 60/2 of 28 April 2004,

Also recalling the internationally agreed goals as contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, and other outcomes of United Nations summits and conferences, in particular the health-related development goals,

Welcoming the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 58/3 of 27 October 2003 and 59/27 of 23 November 2004 on enhancing capacity-building in global public health,

Noting that in those resolutions the General Assembly, inter alia, invited the regional commissions to cooperate closely with Member States, the private sector and civil society in their capacity-building in public health, as well as in regional cooperation to diminish and eliminate the deleterious impact of major infectious diseases,

Reaffirming the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution S-26/2 of 27 June 2001 and noting Commission resolution 59/1 of 4 September 2003 on regional action in follow-up to the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,

Noting with concern that more than nine million people already live with HIV/AIDS in the Asian and Pacific region and that HIV in the region is likely to continue to spread rapidly,

Welcoming the joint declaration of the “3 by 5 Initiative” by the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS,

Mindful that the fight against severe acute respiratory syndrome, the first severe infectious disease to emerge in the twenty-first century, and other epidemics, is far from over,

Noting the outbreak of avian influenza in the poultry population and recognizing its impact on human health as well as on the economy,

Also noting the need to strengthen regional cooperation to prevent any potential outbreak of other preventable diseases,

Noting with concern the serious damage and loss of life caused by the earthquake and tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean rim countries, including the negative impact on human health and development,

Appreciating the generous contribution and assistance to the affected countries from Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and citizens of the world, especially the timely health aid for emergency relief,

Noting with particular concern that non-communicable diseases, and injuries, are rapidly overtaking communicable diseases as the leading causes of death in Asia and the Pacific,

Recognizing that Governments have the primary responsibility for the provision of social services,

Recognizing also the constraints that many countries face in improving health systems and interventions because of their limited human and financial resources for health and insufficient development of the capacity to plan and manage human resources to respond to changes in priorities,

Welcoming the initiative of the World Health Organization Regional Committee for the Western Pacific at its fifty-fifth session, held in Shanghai, China, from 13 to 17 September 2004, to enhance close cooperation between the World Health Organization and ESCAP in response to health and development issues,

Recalling the pioneering contributions of the Asian and Pacific region to the development and implementation of the primary health-care approach to health for all promoted by the World Health Organization,

Welcoming, in this connection, the plan to hold the Sixth Global Conference on Health Promotion in Bangkok from 7 to 11 August 2005,

1. *Urges* members and associate members in the region:

(a) To scale up their investments in the health sector through resource mobilization strategies;

(b) To further integrate public health into their economic and social development strategies, inter alia, through the establishment and improvement of effective public health mechanisms, in particular systems of disease surveillance, response, control, prevention, treatment and information exchange, and the recruitment and training of public health personnel;

(c) To raise professional and public awareness of the importance of public health and mobilize the participation of educational institutions, civil society and the mass media in promoting good public health practices;

(d) To unite in securing a regional commitment to strengthening cooperation on capacity-building in public health;

¹² See paragraphs 202-210 and 221 above.

(e) To improve regional public health preparedness and response systems, including systems for the prevention and monitoring of infectious diseases, to better cope with major diseases, inter alia, in cases of global or regional outbreaks of diseases;

2. *Encourages* donors, including Governments, the private sector, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, and regional and international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, to continue to support countries in the Asian and Pacific region through such means as:

(a) Providing funding and technical support to countries, especially those that face significant risk, in their efforts to combat infectious diseases and epidemics;

(b) Facilitating South-South and North-South cooperation to benefit the Asian and Pacific region, as part of an integral response aimed at building effective public health institutions and practices;

(c) Considering integrating health dimensions into their strategies, work programmes, budget plans, projects and activities, to strengthen regional public health capacity-building, as a priority for the fulfilment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in the Asian and Pacific region;

(d) To consider participating in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and encourage the private sector to contribute to the Fund;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to coordinate closely with the World Health Organization and other relevant organizations:

(a) To assist members and associate members in their capacity-building by mainstreaming health concerns into diverse development sectors in support of the fulfilment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in the region, inter alia, in the programme of work of ESCAP;

(b) To promote coordinated regional action in strengthening capacity-building in public health through the Subcommittee on Health and Development and other health-related institutions of ESCAP, including expanding human resources development in public health, and supporting primary health care and intersectoral actions to address critical health and development issues in accordance with the Regional Framework for Strategic Action: Promoting Health and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Subcommittee on Health and Development at its first session, held in December 2004;

(c) To undertake advocacy on a healthy public policy to create enabling environments for health promotion that strengthens physical, mental and spiritual health resilience and well-being, with an emphasis on community, school and workplace participation, towards a “healthy Asia-Pacific”;

4. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution.

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