

Medicus Mundi International

Meeting: Seventy-first World Health Assembly (A71/1)

Agenda Item: 11.2 Public health preparedness and response

Statement:

Thank you chair for this opportunity to address the WHA on behalf of MMI, supported by PHM.

We appreciate the WHO's Health emergency programme (WHE) acknowledging the urgent need for public health preparedness, and response to health emergencies. We would like to comment on the serious under funding of WHO's core programs. Despite lessons drawn from the Ebola crisis, global response capacities are still underfunded. It is essential to enhance the resourcing of the Contingency Fund and the core budgets for WHE. We urge WHO and MS to ensure full funding of the WFE and the contingency fund. We hope that high-income member states, which have access to funds will take the lead.

We welcome the new orientation of the draft global strategic plan to improve public health preparedness and response, through an emphasis on health systems strengthening, the focus on low capacity and high vulnerable countries, the inter-sectoral approach to public health risks and the approach to continually strengthening preparedness and response capacity.

On the other hand, the financial and technical burden posed by the need to support the implementation of IHRs and the lack of core capacities in LMICs could undermine other strategic health systems investments in LMICs. The costs of global health response to emergencies should be shared across countries based on the principle of equity and in a spirit of solidarity.

Given the rise in contributory factors, such as climate change, austerity measures and migration flows, we can anticipate more emergencies leading to humanitarian crisis in the future. We would like to stress on the fundamental role of comprehensive and well-resourced health systems as the prime necessity for developing preparedness capacities.

Finally the issue of emergency preparedness should not be seen as a health security issue but rather be addressed through greater global solidarity.