

# Health-for-all policy for the twenty-first century

The Fifty-first World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolution WHA48.16;

Recognizing the report “Health-for-all in the twenty-first century” (A51/5) as a framework for the development of future policy,

ADOPTS in the sense of Article 23 of the Constitution the World Health Declaration annexed to the present resolution.

## *Annex*

### WORLD HEALTH DECLARATION

#### I

We, the Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO), reaffirm our commitment to the principle enunciated in its Constitution that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being; in doing so, we affirm the dignity and worth of every person, and the equal rights, equal duties and shared responsibilities of all for health.

#### II

We recognize that the improvement of the health and well-being of people is the ultimate aim of social and economic development. We are committed to the ethical concepts of equity, solidarity and social justice and to the incorporation of a gender perspective into our strategies. We emphasize the importance of reducing social and economic inequities in improving the health of the whole population. Therefore, it is imperative to pay the greatest attention to those most in need, burdened by ill-health, receiving inadequate services for health or affected by poverty. We reaffirm our will to promote health by addressing the basic determinants and prerequisites for health. We acknowledge that changes in the world health situation require that we give effect to the “Health-for-All Policy for the twenty-first century” through relevant regional and national policies and strategies.

#### III

We recommit ourselves to strengthening, adapting and reforming, as appropriate, our health systems, including essential public health functions and services, in order to ensure universal access to health services that

are based on scientific evidence, of good quality and within affordable limits, and that are sustainable for the future. We intend to ensure the availability of the essentials of primary health care as defined in the Declaration of Alma-Ata<sup>1</sup> and developed in the new policy. We will continue to develop health systems to respond to the current and anticipated health conditions, socioeconomic circumstances and needs of the people, communities and countries concerned, through appropriately managed public and private actions and investments for health.

#### IV

We recognize that in working towards health for all, all nations, communities, families and individuals are interdependent. As a community of nations, we will act together to meet common threats to health and to promote universal well-being.

#### V

We, the Member States of the World Health Organization, hereby resolve to promote and support the rights and principles, action and responsibilities enunciated in this Declaration through concerted action, full participation and partnership, calling on all peoples and institutions to share the vision of health for all in the twenty-first century, and to endeavour in common to realize it.

Tenth plenary meeting, 16 May 1998  
A51/VR/10

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted at the International Conference on Primary Health Care, Alma-Ata, 6-12 September 1978, and endorsed by the Thirty-second World Health Assembly in resolution WHA32.30 (May 1979).