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Medicus Mundi International

Meeting:

Seventieth World Health Assembly (A70/1)

Agenda Item:

16.1 Progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Statement:

Thank for the opportunity to address the Assembly on behalf of MMI. This statement is supported by PHM.

We appreciate the efforts in setting SDG indicators that emphasize multisectoral actions to address social determinants of health, and strengthening health systems. We support the focus on equity and justice to address the unfinished work of the MDGs.

However, some areas require further consideration. First, the structure of the global economy underpins social and health development. This area, under SDG 8, anticipates very high economic growth rates in LMICs based on the current corporate-dominated extractivist model. This approach is cannot mitigate local and global inequities nor is it environmentally sustainable. WHO should point out this contradiction and strenuously promote review of this economic model. Second, as regards SDG Goal 3 which is related to good health and well-being; WHO should strongly advocate for increased investment in this, as well as on SDG6 ('Clean Water and Sanitation') to achieve sustainable health gains.

Thirdly, WHO should lead policies to regulate the increasingly monopolised, globalised food system which is simultaneously threatening food sovereignty and promoting unhealthy diets.

SDG3, which prioritises UHC, requires an adequate and functional health workforce. The failure of the WHO voluntary code on the international recruitment of health workers means legally binding interventions are required and provisions necessary so that sending countries get reimbursed for losses linked to health worker migration from the South to the North. We also urge WHO and MS to structure health systems so that they are financed through general taxes and provisioned by public services. Such a model best promotes equity in healthcare access.

We also urge member states to mandate the Secretariat to report annual progress on the health dimensions of all SDG goals so that WHO can institute adequate policies to achieve health equity.

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