

Ministerial Communiqué

Foreign Policy and Global Health (FPGH) Network

Issued on the occasion of the

71st session of the United Nations General Assembly General Debate

21 September 2016

1. The Foreign Ministers and representatives of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand met on the margins of the 71st session of the UN General Assembly General Debate, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Foreign Policy and Global Health network.
2. The Ministers took stock of the progress made in the implementation of the Oslo Ministerial Declaration on Global Health: a Pressing Foreign Policy Issue of Our Time, which recognised that there are technical and political dimensions to the protection and promotion of global health and human security which do not only include actions from Ministries of Health and the World Health Organisation, but which require inter-governmental as well as inter-agency coordination and collaboration including with academia, - civil society, and private sector.
3. The ministers recalled that health is a precondition for implementing all three dimensions for sustainable development and, in that context, emphasized the importance of SDG 3 and other health related targets for the successful implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.
4. They recalled their undertaking to continue to increase awareness on the common vulnerabilities of national health systems by bringing health issues more strongly into the arena of foreign policy discussions and decisions, in order to strengthen commitment to concerted action at the global level.
5. They also undertook to build bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation on global health issues by strengthening the case for collaboration and brokering broadbased agreement, accountability and action as well as to strengthen the place of health measures in situations of crisis.
6. They further undertook to reinforce health as a key element in strategies for development and for fighting poverty.
7. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the Doha Declaration on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and Public Health and underlined the need for the full implementation of the TRIPS flexibilities.
8. Now, ten years after having made these undertakings the Ministers reaffirmed that access to quality healthcare remained a fundamental right of every human being and that health was and should be a key element of any strategy aimed at promoting

development and eradicating poverty. They underlined that challenges in global health, including major inequities and vulnerabilities among and within countries and regions, still remain and that they demand persistent attention and reinforced commitment of the international community to eradicate poverty and to promote sustainable development.

9. The Ministers noted that all nations were vulnerable to risks and crises in their national health systems and that foreign policy actions in areas of humanitarian assistance, trade, environment, conflict resolution and crisis situations have an impact on national as well as global health.
10. They voiced, in this regard, the urgent need to strengthen the national health systems of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks, including for disasters and emergencies as well as the effective implementation of the International Health Regulations under the auspices of the World Health Organisation.
11. While reaffirming the central role of the WHO as the United Nations specialized agency for health and the lead agency to support the implementation of the international health regulations (IHR 2005), the ministers commended the WHO for its coordinating role in addressing the public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) regarding Zika virus and related microcephaly and other neurological disorders.
12. They noted that issues related to the environment, trade, economic growth, social development, national security, human rights and dignity are interconnected and that the achievement of the health goal in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was both dependent on these issues and able to influence them as part of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
13. The Ministers reaffirmed to continue implementing and advancing universal health coverage that comprise equitable access to quality health services and ensures affordable and quality service delivery, especially through primary health care and social protection mechanisms, with the support of the international community and with a view to providing access to health services for all, in particular those in vulnerable or marginalized groups or situations
14. The Ministers noted the Communiqué issued by the health ministers of the FPGH network on the margins of the World Health Assembly in May 2016 indicating that much progress had been made through awareness raising by the network in addressing global health threats such as the availability of vaccines, the fights against HIV and AIDS, raising awareness on the dangers of anti-microbial resistance, access to medicine, increasing the health workforce globally, and efforts to improve responses in relation to health-related emergencies.
15. They welcomed the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on the Global Response to Health Crises, and appreciated the United Nations Secretary-General's leadership by creating a new Global Health Crises Task Force that will monitor, coordinate and support the follow-up and implementation of the Panel's recommendations as they relate to the UN system and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

16. They underlined the gravity of anti-microbial resistance as a threat to global health, and the significance of the High Level Meeting taking place that same day, while calling for the commitments made in the Declaration emerging from that meeting to be implemented fully and as a matter of urgency.
17. Bearing in mind that a robust, expanded, transformed health work force will contribute to building resilient health systems and that beyond benefits for public health, the social and health sectors will generate decent and sustainable jobs, with substantial gains in terms of social protection, inclusive economic growth, equity and human rights, as well as for women and youth's economic empowerment, the Ministers welcomed the establishment by the United Nations Secretary-General, of the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth (HLC HEEG) following the adoption of United Nations General Assembly resolution A/70/183 on Global Health and Foreign Policy.
18. The Ministers welcomed the report of the High-level Commission, which was launched on 20 September 2016 and expressed the hope that its recommendations, which would require stronger action and cooperation with non-health sectors such as finance, education, labour, social welfare as well as research and development would be taken on board by all governments, international organizations, civil society, business, and all relevant stakeholders. In this regard they decided to table a resolution on this matter during the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly.
19. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to continue advancing global health issues in the broader United Nations framework and beyond, in particular by maintaining and utilising the item "Global Health and Foreign Policy" on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly.