

Save the date

Side event to the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly Ending HIV, tuberculosis and viral hepatitis through intersectoral collaboration in Europe and Central Asia

Thursday, 27 September 2018, 8:00 - 9:30 AM

Conference Room 5, United Nations Headquarters

Co-organized by the Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations, the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe and the International Organization for Migration

Background

Substantial health improvements have been reached in the WHO European Region, with a growing life expectancy and gradually decreasing inequities across countries. However, not all parts of the population are benefiting equally from this trend, especially the poor and those in vulnerable situations¹. This is also the case with regard to tuberculosis (TB), HIV and viral hepatitis, which are of key concern in the region.

Despite having the fastest decline of TB rates among all regions, the European region, which includes central Asia, still bears the highest proportion of multidrug-resistant TB globally and is the region with fastest rate of increase in the number of new HIV infections. Hepatitis B is estimated to have chronically infected more than 15 million in the region and hepatitis C 14 million, most of whom are unaware of their status.

Ensuring health and well-being for all at all ages and “leaving no one behind” are core values embedded in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To this end, an Issue-based Coalition on Health and Well-being for All at All Ages was established to foster cross-sectoral cooperation on health in the European Region. Led by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, with inputs from all relevant United Nations agencies and after a public consultation, the paper United Nations Common Position on Ending HIV, Tuberculosis and Viral Hepatitis through Intersectoral Collaboration was finalized and endorsed by the United Nations Regional Coordinating Mechanism on 9 May 2018. This Position Paper aims to guide multi-sectoral collaboration across health and non-health sectors to end these epidemics through a sustainable development approach. In the light of the first ever United Nations high-level meeting on TB and the third high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases, the current side event presents a unique opportunity to launch the aforementioned Common Position Paper and to exchange on good practices.

Key note Speakers:

- H.E. Ms Maria Fernanda Espinosa, President of the UN General Assembly (*tbc*)
- Prof. Stanislav Špánik, State Secretary of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic
- Dr Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director for Europe
- Ms Argentina Szabados, Regional Director for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Organization for Migration
- H.E. Dr Vytenis Andriukaitis, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, European Commission (*tbc*)
- Mr Safar Naimov, former TB patient, community perspective
- H.E. Mr Adam Vojtěch, Minister of Health of the Czech Republic
- H.E. Mr Fernando Araújo, Secretary of State for Health of Portugal
- Mr Simon Bland, Director, Liaison Office New York, UNAIDS (*tbc*)
- High level representatives of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Netherlands and Slovenia to be confirmed)

Note: For more information and queries on attendance, please contact: WHO Regional Office for Europe via euroTB@who.int

¹ The UN Common Position Paper on Ending HIV, Tuberculosis and Viral Hepatitis Through Intersectoral Collaboration clarifies that “the poor and those in vulnerable situations, including children, youth, person with disabilities, people living with HIV, people with TB, indigenous populations, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants, and in particular prisoners, homeless people, people who use inject drugs, women and girls, victims of human trafficking and of gender-based violence, sex workers, and men who have sex with men, and, LGBTI people” are among those who are not benefitting from the health improvements that have been reached in the WHO European Region.