

## **Statement to the General Assembly of the World Federation of Public Health Associations**

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Dear colleagues,

Let me express my gratitude to the WFPHA for having been in so close cooperation with the WHO over the past year. I am pleased to see that we are moving on the project to align public health with the current global requirements, and I am happy to see how you are advancing in the preparations for the 14<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Public Health.

There are a couple of important issues that I would be grateful if you could address them in your deliberations:

In order to achieve UHC, population subgroups' differential exposure to risk factors, and their different levels of vulnerability due to societal conditions must be addressed as currently, stark differences in the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of health services between richer and poorer groups of society persist. The question I have is how you can concretely work in the World Federation to ensure that Public Health Organizations at national and local levels will comprehensively address these huge inequities.

Globalization, or the increased interconnectedness and interdependence of peoples and countries, is generally understood to include two interrelated elements: the opening of borders to increasingly fast flows of goods, services, finance, people and ideas across international borders; and the changes in institutional and policy regimes at the international and national levels that facilitate or promote such flows. It is recognized that globalization has both positive and negative impacts on health development. Such impacts need to be better understood by public health professionals. If the World Federation as the global Umbrella Organization for Public Health will not address this, nobody else can, and nobody else will.

I know that the global consultation on public health will reveal these issues, but I would urge you to already now think about how you want to organize yourselves in order to aligned, forceful and a real added value to development. I am pleased to see that you are establishing regional branches of the World Federation.

You may wish to discuss the accountability mechanisms that bring together national and Regional efforts into a global community of public health.

I wish you good deliberations and look forward to working with you in the coming year.