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# REFUGEE HEALTH: LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

## STATEMENT ON SESSION 5 (A): ROADMAP TO IMPLEMENT THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, BUILDING ON THE HEALTH 2020 POLICY FRAMEWORK

The organizations supporting this statement welcome the roadmap to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular the second strategic direction – *leaving no one behind*.

The health and social inequalities among migrants and displaced people are well known, yet they are still staggering. A real humanitarian point-of-view and urgency in implementing actions are needed.

Existing policies must be revised to promote accessibility and appropriateness of the health care services for refugees, and eliminate exposure to social exclusion. Strategies must be put in place to guarantee access to safe drinking water, food, sanitation, hygiene, shelter and essential health services for refugees. Particular attention must be paid to the specific needs of the vulnerable groups of older people, those with disabilities and mental health problems, and patients needing palliative care – including those just arrived and living in refugee settlements for many years.

Even more urgently, we must protect the children for they did not choose the world they were brought into.

We reiterate our call on Member States to recommend, where practicable, the implementation of pre-departure medical examination, proper communication, coordination protocols and reporting for post-arrival follow-up to guarantee the safe travel and resettlement of the refugees without discrimination based on health status. To this end:

- a) we note the role of primary health care in assisting refugees, especially after their resettlement, by providing people-centered services which respond to their health needs;
- b) we urge Member States to consider specific preventive strategies for underage refugees and safeguard them from developing mental and physical disease in the future;
- c) we welcome information technology in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- d) we wish to highlight that strengthening health information systems, and prioritizing their harmonization and standardization in the European region can support better surveillance and coordination, and increase the appropriateness of health services.

Finally, we urge Member States to continuously evaluate their policies and strategies so that they reflect the evolving situation on the ground. We are willing to consult and cooperate with other stakeholders in designing and implementing the appropriate strategies to address the health needs and the social determinants of health of refugees.

Thank you for your attention.

## NGOS SUPPORTING THIS STATEMENT

- **COTEC:** The European organization for all Occupational Therapists through their National Associations, with the purpose of ensuring an adequate number of high quality occupational therapy practitioners and services in Europe. COTEC is a regional group of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT), representing more than 130.000 Occupational therapists.
- **IAHPC:** The International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care is an international membership organisation dedicated to the promotion and development of palliative care throughout the world.
- **WFOT:** The World Federation of Occupational Therapists is the official representative of occupational therapy internationally, representing 480,000 occupational therapists worldwide. WFOT through its member associations and regional groups promotes and establishes high quality occupational therapy services and education programmes.
- **WHPCA:** The Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance is an international non-governmental organisation focusing exclusively on hospice and palliative care development worldwide. We are a network of national and regional hospice and palliative care organisations and affiliate organisations.
- **WONCA Europe:** The European regional network of the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) represents more than 80,000 family doctors through their Member Organisations across Europe.