

Statement of the Slovak Republic
156th Session of the Executive Board
Agenda Item 22 Climate change and health
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Mr/Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

The Slovak Republic aligns with the European Union and its Member States. We thank the WHO Secretariat for presenting the comprehensive Draft Global Action Plan on Climate Change and Health. We commend the consultative process that has engaged Member States, civil society, and technical experts, aligning the Plan with key international frameworks such as the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

*Slovakia recognizes climate change as a profound threat to public health. Its impacts ranging from extreme weather events to the disruption of health systems demand urgent, coordinated global action. We fully support the adoption of this Plan and its focus on **leadership, evidence, and country-level implementation**. However, we believe the following areas require further emphasis to ensure effective and equitable outcomes.*

*While the Plan outlines necessary actions, **sustainable financing mechanisms** must be strengthened. Slovakia proposes exploring innovative funding options, such as **climate bonds, public-private partnerships**, and a **global climate-health financing facility**, to support national and subnational implementation, particularly in resource-constrained settings.*

*Building the adaptive capacity of health systems is vital. Slovakia emphasizes the need for **climate-proofing health infrastructure and supply chains**, particularly at the primary care level. Early warning systems and comprehensive training programs for health professionals must be integrated into national adaptation plans.*

*The Plan should elaborate on strategies for engaging non-health sectors such as agriculture, urban planning, and energy. Slovakia recommends establishing **formal coordination mechanisms** at national and local levels to ensure cohesive, multisectoral action that addresses the social and environmental determinants of health.*

*Global and national strategies must be effectively translated into actionable measures at the local level. Slovakia supports the development of **toolkits, capacity-building programs, and community engagement frameworks** to empower municipalities to implement tailored climate health solutions.*

*Robust **monitoring systems** are essential to track progress and adapt strategies. Slovakia calls for **expanded indicators** to capture health system resilience and the effectiveness of adaptation measures, ensuring accountability and evidence-based policymaking.*

Slovakia's Commitments and Challenges

Slovakia has made significant strides in climate and health action:

- *Since 1990, we have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 50%.*
- *Our **National Adaptation Plan** prioritizes health protection during extreme weather events.*

- We are integrating climate considerations into the **National Environment and Health Action Plan (NEHAP VI)**.

However, we face challenges such as **air pollution**, which causes over 5,000 premature deaths annually, and the lack of a **comprehensive national human biomonitoring program**. To address these gaps:

- Slovakia advocates for a **WHO-led global biomonitoring program** to track population exposure to environmental pollutants.
- We request enhanced **technical support for air quality management**, including cost-effective interventions and cross-sectoral policies.

Proposals for Strengthened Global, Regional, and National Action:

- (1) At the **global level**, Slovakia highlights the importance of WHO's leadership in advocating for the integration of health into global climate agendas. WHO should lead by example by adopting a **net-zero roadmap for its operations**, demonstrating its commitment to sustainability. To address resource constraints, Slovakia calls for the establishment of a **global climate-health financing facility**, which would support vulnerable countries and promote multilateral funding mechanisms to ensure equitable resource distribution. Additionally, WHO should provide **technical guidance**, including best-practice methods, tools, and case studies, to help countries effectively evaluate the health impacts of climate policies and actions.
- (2) At the **regional level**, Slovakia emphasizes the need for **knowledge exchange platforms** to facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned among Member States, particularly within the European Region. Addressing workforce and health infrastructure vulnerabilities during climate-related crises requires the development of **regional contingency plans** that enhance emergency preparedness and resilience. Furthermore, WHO should support **capacity-building** efforts by adapting global frameworks to regional contexts, ensuring that solutions are both culturally and regionally appropriate.
- (3) At the **national level**, Slovakia underlines the importance of developing **integrated health and climate strategies**, with WHO providing technical assistance to ensure health considerations are embedded within national climate plans and vice versa. Building the capacity of health professionals through **competency-based training** on climate resilience and adaptation is essential for preparing the workforce to meet emerging challenges. Finally, localized implementation is key; Slovakia advocates for support to municipalities in creating **climate-resilient health systems** and engaging communities in co-designing and implementing tailored solutions that address specific local needs.

Slovakia's experience with integrating climate considerations into its National Adaptation Plan and National Environment and Health Action Plan (NEHAP VI) underscores several key priorities for optimizing climate-resilient health systems. **Multisectoral collaboration** is essential, requiring alignment between health, environment, and energy sectors to ensure synergistic outcomes and effective implementation of climate-health measures. **Targeted**

***investments** are critical, with a focus on funding initiatives such as air quality improvement programs and heatwave response plans that directly mitigate climate-related health risks. Additionally, **community engagement** plays a vital role in empowering local governments and stakeholders to implement tailored climate-health interventions that address specific regional needs.*

*Slovakia emphasizes the need for enhanced support from WHO to advance Member States' capabilities in climate-health planning and implementation. The Secretariat can **enhance technical support** by providing guidance on integrating health considerations into national climate strategies and promoting evidence-based adaptation measures. It is equally important to **strengthen data systems** through the development of a global biomonitoring framework, which would track the health impacts of climate change and inform evidence-based policymaking. Furthermore, Slovakia highlights the value of WHO's role in **facilitating access to financing**, assisting Member States in navigating multilateral funding mechanisms and developing robust proposals for climate-health projects.*

In conclusion, Slovak Republic reaffirms its commitment to collaborating with WHO and Member States to implement the Global Action Plan on Climate Change and Health. By addressing financing gaps, building health system resilience, and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, we can safeguard both planetary and human health. Slovakia stands ready to contribute its expertise and experiences to this collective effort.

Thank you for your attention.