



**Summary report by the Chair
H.E. Dr Ali Haji Adam Abubakar, Minister of Health of Somalia**

PART 1: TOPICS FOR GLOBAL DISCUSSION

Proposed approach for a draft full plan for the WHO investment round

1. The Regional Committee discussed the proposed approach to developing a draft full plan for the first WHO investment round. The timeline and process for subsequent consultation with Member States were explained. Member States discussed related issues but did not formally adopt a common position.

Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028

2. The Regional Committee discussed the development of the Fourteenth General Programme of Work (GPW 14). The timeline and process for subsequent consultation with Member States were explained. Member States discussed related issues but did not formally adopt a common position.

PART 2: TOPICS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The work of the World Health Organization in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: Final report on implementing Vision 2023

3. Members of the Regional Committee expressed their appreciation of WHO's vision for health in the Region, *Vision 2023*, and the implementation of its accompanying strategy during the period 2018–2023, noting the progress made despite the challenging regional context and the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need to accelerate action if the health-related Sustainable Development Goals are to be achieved in the Region.

Addressing noncommunicable diseases in emergencies: a regional framework for action¹

4. Recognizing that, while noncommunicable diseases (NCD) cause 66.5% of all deaths annually in the Region, NCD services are often neglected in emergency preparedness and response plans, the Regional Committee endorsed a new regional framework for action on addressing NCDs in emergencies. The framework will guide Member States in implementing a set of strategic interventions and priority actions to help ensure that people living with NCDs continue to get the support they need even in the most testing circumstances.

¹ Resolution EM/RC70/R.2. Addressing noncommunicable diseases in emergencies: a regional framework for action. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2023 (<https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/Addressing-NCDs-emergencies-finalize-publish-D-eng.pdf?ua=1>).

Strengthening public health readiness for mass gatherings in the Eastern Mediterranean Region¹

5. Building on the Region's strong expertise in planning for and managing the potential health risks associated with mass gatherings, the Regional Committee endorsed a regional framework for strengthening public health readiness for mass gatherings (2023–2028) to minimize the public health risks and ensure the safety of events, and to integrate the capacities developed during these events into longer-term health system strengthening activities.

Health workforce in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: from COVID-19 lessons to action²

6. The Regional Committee issued a call for action to enhance and scale up the health workforce in the Region to tackle the critical shortages and skills gaps highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Climate change, health and environment: a regional framework for action, 2023–2029³

7. The Regional Committee endorsed a new regional framework for action on climate change and health to support efforts to address the massive health implications of climate change in the Region, where temperatures and other climatic hazards are changing twice as fast as in the rest of the world, fuelling environmental degradation, natural disasters, weather extremes, food and water insecurity, economic disruption and conflict.

Regional strategic action framework to strengthen road safety systems⁴

8. The Regional Committee endorsed a regional strategic action framework to strengthen road safety systems.

Extension of the regional strategy and action plan for tobacco control⁵

9. The Regional Committee endorsed an extension of the implementation period of the regional strategy and action plan for tobacco control 2019–2023 to 2030.

Nomination of a new Regional Director

10. The Regional Committee nominated a new WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, Dr Hanan Hassan Balkhy of Saudi Arabia, for a period of five years from 1 February 2024. The nomination will be submitted to the WHO Executive Board at its 154th session in January 2024. The Committee also expressed its appreciation to Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari for his commitment to international public health and his contributions and achievements during his tenure as Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, and decided to make him Regional Director Emeritus.

¹ Resolution EM/RC70/R.3. Strengthening public health readiness for mass gatherings in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2023 9 <https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/Mass-gatherings-finalize-publish-D-eng.pdf?ua=1>).

² Resolution EM/RC70/R.4. A call for action to enhance and scale up the health workforce in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2023 (<https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/Health-workforce-finalize-publish-D-eng.pdf?ua=1>).

³ Resolution EM/RC70/R.5. Climate change, health and environment: a regional framework for action, 2023–2029. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2023 (<https://applications.emro.who.int/docs/Climate-change-health-finalize-publish-D-eng.pdf?ua=1>).

⁴ Resolution EM/RC70/R.1. Report on the implementation of Vision 2023 for the Eastern Mediterranean Region for 2018–2023. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2023.

⁵ Resolution EM/RC70/R.1. Report on the implementation of Vision 2023 for the Eastern Mediterranean Region for 2018–2023. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2023.

Other topics for global discussion

11. The Regional Committee received a presentation on other topics for global discussion, including: the political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, and mental health; substandard and falsified medical products; the global strategy on infection prevention and control; the WHO traditional medicine strategy 2014–2023; achieving well-being: a global framework for integrating well-being into public health utilizing a health promotion approach; strengthening diagnostics capacity; integrated emergency, critical and operative care for universal health coverage and protection from health emergencies; behavioural sciences for better health; and the health of Indigenous peoples. Regional consultation is being undertaken on several of these issues, but Member States did not formally adopt a common position through the Regional Committee.