

WHA79; agenda item 15.5

Joint statement by FINLAND on the draft strategy on the economics of health for all

Chair,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of a group of countries consisting of Belgium, Canada, Ecuador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Latvia, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden and my own country Finland.

We welcome the strategy on the Economics of Health for All. The strategy demonstrates the importance of greater policy coherence across sectors. Health outcomes, sustainable economic growth, social cohesion and environmental sustainability are deeply interconnected.

Strong and well-functioning health systems are an essential part of inclusive and resilient economies. They enable participation in education and labour markets for all, protect people from financial shocks, and strengthen social cohesion and trust. Fragile health systems, by contrast, undermine productivity, increase inequality and leave societies vulnerable both to poverty and to systemic shocks.

We therefore welcome the strategy's strong emphasis on the whole-of-government approach and country leadership. It is important that the strategy has been developed with due regard to guiding principles such as social participation, equity and gender equality.

The strategy provides useful guidance for Member States for integrating health considerations into fiscal, labour, education, environmental and other public policies, and demonstrating the value of health as an investment through improved evidence and well-being frameworks. Strengthened dialogue across ministries, as well as with the civil society, affected communities and the private

sector will be critical for the success of this process. This is of particular importance in ensuring that we can effectively address the social and commercial determinants of health and promote more equitable health outcomes across populations.

To ensure success of these country-led processes, WHO has a crucial role in supporting Member States through normative guidance and technical assistance and by facilitating exchange of experience across regions.

To advance the Economics of Health for All approach, it is essential to further strengthen the integration of a sustainable economic perspective within the implementation of the strategy. In this regard, engagement with members of the panel of the WHO Council on the Economics of Health for All would provide an important platform for fostering balanced dialogue across different perspectives and reinforcing coherence between health and economic sustainability.

We look forward to working with the Secretariat and partners to implement the strategy. To us it is clear that better wellbeing of people is beneficial for societies and their resilience and it also contributes to sustainable economic prosperity that extends to future generations.

Thank you.