

## Mental health: responding to the call for action

The Fifty-fifth World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolutions WHA28.84 and EB61.R28<sup>1</sup> on the promotion of mental health, resolution WHA29.21 on psychosocial factors and health, resolutions WHA32.40, WHA33.27 and EB69.R9 on alcohol- and drug-related problems, resolution WHA30.38 on mental retardation, resolution WHA39.25 on prevention of mental, neurological and psychosocial disorders, resolution EUR/RC51/R5 on the Athens Declaration on Mental Health, Man-Made Disasters, Stigma and Community Care and resolution EB109.R8 on strengthening mental health;

Bearing in mind World Health Day 2001, the ministerial round tables at the Fifty-fourth World Health Assembly, *The world health report 2001* on mental health, and the multitude of activities initiated during 2000-2002 related to advocacy, policy and programme development, legislation, and research;

Considering the imperative need to pursue and accelerate such activities worldwide in order to improve the mental-health status of populations, especially the most vulnerable groups;

Welcoming the definition in *The world health report 2001* of the activities related to promotion, prevention and care and to the protection of the human rights of people with mental illness and their families that all Member States can implement according to their level of priorities and resources in mental health;

Recognizing that the toll of mental health problems is very high and rising worldwide, that such problems cause significant disability, heighten the risk of social exclusion, and increase mortality, that stigmatization and discrimination are major problems obstructing the path to care, and that the human and economic costs are staggering;

Noting the existence of programmes which can prevent the occurrence of a significant proportion of these problems and thus reduce their negative social impact and human suffering;

Further recognizing the need to maintain the momentum on mental health to raise public and professional awareness of the real burden of mental disorders, to protect the human rights of people with mental illness as an integral component of mental-health policies, and to implement strategies, programmes and policies as proposed in WHO's global action programme for mental health,

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<sup>1</sup> *The world health report 2001. Mental health: new understanding, new hope*. Geneva, World Health Organization 2001.

URGES Member States:

- (1) to reaffirm the provisions of resolution EB109.R8;
- (2) to provide support to WHO's global action programme for mental health;
- (3) to increase investments in mental health both within countries and in bilateral and multilateral cooperation, as an integral component of the well-being of populations;
- (4) to strengthen action to protect children from and in armed conflict.

Ninth plenary meeting, 18 May 2002  
A55/VR/9

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