

**Committee of Senior Representatives (CSR)
Twenty First Meeting
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Northern Dimension
Partnership in Public Health
and Social Well-being
www.ndphs.org

Reference	CSR 21/9.2/1
Title	Proposed draft Statement from the PAC 10 side-event
Submitted by	HIV/AIDS&AI EG
Summary / Note	The proposed draft Statement has been developed by the HIV/AIDS&AI EG as an outcome document of the PAC 10 side-event for discussion. The Meeting will be invited to decide on further steps regarding the finalization and possible adoption of the Statement.
Requested action	For discussion and decision on further steps

STATEMENT / Side Event / Draft 010413, including comments from EG HIV/AIDS&AI by 31.3.2013

Background

It is a positive and recognized impact from different national and regional activities that the incidences of new HIV and tuberculosis (TB) cases are decreasing in most countries within the NDPHS area.

However, Eastern Europe and Central Asia is one of the few regions globally where the Millenium Development Goal 6 on halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and TB will, if the current trends continue, likely not be reached.

Increase in reported cases of double infections of HIV and TB and multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR TB) and extensively drug-Resistant Tuberculosis (XDR TB) is of great concern and represent the most important challenge in the field of communicable disease in the NDPHS area.

A forceful response with development of new working approaches is necessary to meet this worrying situation within the NDPHS Area and with neighboring countries. The response should include wide and determined actions.

Previous efforts

In the past, partner countries have engaged themselves in the work against the spread of HIV and TB through various commitments, such as MDG 6, Dublin declaration, UNAIDS Vision for Three Zeros, national policies etc.

In addition, a huge amount of national, local, international and regional projects and programs has been implemented, e.g.:

- Actions funded by UN organizations
- Actions funded by Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- EU programs
- Regional multinational programs
- 10 years of NDPHS
- Baltic Sea Task Force against the spread of infectious diseases
- Barents cooperation on health and social related issues
- Bilateral cooperation between various countries within the NDPHS region
- National activities

Recognition

We, undersigned partner countries and organizations, recognize increasing HIV and TB double infections and increasing MDR and XDR TB as joint challenges and a threat to public health in the region.

We have recognized the complexity of the current situation, including the role of the use of drugs, migration, prisons, social marginalization, human trafficking and ineffective responses of health and social care systems.

There are groups which are at greatest risk for HIV/TB co-infection such as migrants, IDUs and prisoners whose special needs have not been met adequately so far.

We also recognize that within the region there is great variation in the epidemiological situation and responses are dependent on national policies, legislation and guidelines.

We recognize our national and joint responsibilities in the provision of support to the implementation of shared policy recommendations.

Engagements for joint collaboration

We, undersigned partner countries and organizations, are engaged for mutual respect on different approaches. We understand that there are different cultural norms and working cultures and, therefore, the national aims of the work may vary.

Among partners, we will encourage and provide mutual support and exchange of relevant information and experiences between experts and between policy and decision makers.

We will provide support to comprehensive and joint actions, combining primary health and social care to improve early diagnostics, provision of psychological and social care and accessibility to medication, especially for those who are most at need of support.

According to our mutual understanding, we recognize that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are willing to cooperate with national authorities and support governmental efforts play an important role in improving the HIV and tuberculosis situation, strengthening the prevention of the spread of TB and HIV/TB and decreasing the harmful consequences of HIV and TB and HIV/TB dual infection.

We underline the potential and crucial role of the European Commission and international organizations, such as, WHO, UNAIDS, ECDC, IOM, ILO, BEAC, NCM as well as initiatives like NDPHS, EUSBSR and CBSS in providing support for the work to prevent the spread of HIV and TB and their consequences for human lives, societies and economy.

We declare that we will be engaged for further development of national efforts, joint platforms and new regional approaches to prevent the worsening of the current situation.

In the current environment of active regional migration flow between different parts of Europe and in view of the spread of HIV/TB infections without boundaries and limitations, we are ready to consider the possibility of expanding the territories of cooperation with NDPHS to the neighboring countries such as Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus.

We will support the NDPHS by all available means in the facilitation of cooperation by joint international activities which will be adapted to prevailing conditions within countries.

We support a strategy in which bi- and multilateral projects in the near future should be replaced by continuous, practical cooperation between governments, institutions and NGOs.

Through this support we are engaged to strengthening the prevention and reduction of impacts and harmful consequences of HIV, AIDS and TB.