

The Republic of Moldova
Position for the World Health Organization Assembly

I. Increasing Private Sector Financing for Healthcare Access in Developing Member States

Our world is growing in population, technological advancement, and other rapid transformations. Amid these challenges, one of the most devastating crises we experience today is the issue of Healthcare access and Financing. The Republic of Moldova recognizes the urgent challenge that developing Member States face in securing equitable access to healthcare. Moldova acknowledges that public financing alone cannot meet the heightening healthcare needs, especially after the refugee and Covid 19 crises. The Republic of Moldova asserts that carefully managed private sector financing, aligning with World Health Organization's (WHO) principles of affordability and equity can play a significant role in supporting the success of universal Health coverage.

Historically, Moldova has experienced intense and continued healthcare system challenges, such as being among the lowest in Europe for health expenditure per capita and strongly dependent on foreign aid to sustain the country's medical services. According to macrotrends, health expenditure was around US \$410 in 2021 and \$398.15 in 2022, which is a 2.92% decline from 2021. The introduction of the State benefit package and expansion of health insurance coverage by the government brought an improvement in the health system. Nationally, this attempt has been significant in protecting citizens from healthcare costs. In addition, programs and healthcare initiatives like vaccination, maternal and child health and the management of Non communicable diseases (NCDs), has been successful in controlling diseases and mortality rate.

Internationally, the Republic of Moldova partnered with World Health Organization (WHO) in 2022 to provide health services to strengthen health, wellbeing and dignity of refugees who flee from the Ukrainian war to Moldova as well as its residents. This collaboration was significant because Moldova, despite being a relatively small country with limited resources, hosted many refugees which became a hurdle on the healthcare systems. Moldova **calls upon** developing member states to establish a Regional Health Innovation Funds that will drive resources from international organization, private investors, NGOs, to finance and well equip hospitals, whereas improving telemedicine technologies. Moldova **urges** all member states to form ethical regulatory bodies to ensure transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, Moldova **advocates** for the establishment of a Health Impact Bond to raise funds in improving maternal and newborn health, community healthcare projects through private investors. And when these projects turn successful, repayment will be done by donors. Moldova believes that strategic partnership between private and public sector with guidance by WHO and the United Nation's oversight accompanied with proper execution and funding, these solutions will help improve private sector financing for healthcare access in developing Member States.

II. Addressing the Ongoing Global Opioid Epidemic

The Republic of Moldova acknowledges the global opioid epidemic as a critical public health crisis requiring immediate international action. Moldova fully supports the World Health Organization's (WHO) efforts to promote a balanced approach that ensures access to essential medications while minimizing the risks of misuse and dependence. Moldova advocates for global cooperation in regulating opioid distribution, strengthen prevention programs, and improving treatment accessibility, especially for vulnerable populations.

Historically, Moldova has experienced challenges related to substance use, including the misuse of opioids, though not in the same scale as seen in some other regions. During the post-soviet transition, Moldova faced socioeconomic instability that contributed to rising rates of drug use, particularly among youth. While Moldova has made progress in monitoring drug use and implementing public health responses, gaps remain in harm reduction services and in access to comprehensive treatment options. Moldova has begun to adopt a type of opioid therapy called Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT), and harm reduction programs with the support of international partners but continues to face resource and infrastructure challenges.

To address the opioid epidemic effectively, the Republic of Moldova **advocates** for strengthened multilateral partnerships focused on three core areas: expanding technical assistance for the development and scaling of evidence based treatment programs that would enhance cross border cooperation to disrupt the trafficking of illicit opioids and this would increase investment in public health education for the youth in ways like awareness campaigns and school based prevention efforts.

Furthermore, Moldova **emphasizes** its support to the development and widespread adoption of standardized WHO guidelines for the safe prescription, monitoring, and disposal of opioid medications. Moldova urges all member states to adopt a public health and human-rights-based approach that priorities healthcare access and rehabilitation services over punitive measures. Moldova remains committed to active engagement within the UNAIDS, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The Republic of Moldova **calls upon** a Member States, to intensify collaborative efforts in combating the opioid crisis by increasing funding for research into non-addictive pain management alternatives, improving international data sharing on opioid trafficking routes, and supporting low- and middle-income countries in building sustainable harm reduction infrastructure. Moldova **further calls upon** regional partnerships with organizations such as the European Union, the Organization for security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Council of Europe's Pompidou Group, as well as global cooperations with previously stated organizations like UNODC, WHO, and UNAIDS to promote community-based rehabilitation initiatives and to integrate mental health support as a fundamental component of opioid dependency treatment frameworks.