

Agenda Item: 7.4 Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)

Statement:

MMI would like to take this opportunity to address agenda item 7.4. Our statement is supported by PHM and TWN.

IHRs were created as instruments for promotion of solidarity actions among countries in the course of promotion of global health. We regret the current promotion of a security approach to IHRs designed to secure more wealthy countries from possible threats to health from countries more vulnerable to epidemics. Exerting pressure on developing countries to comply with obligations without creating the conditions which allow them to invest in health systems is contrary to the very purpose of IHRs. We urge Member States to adopt a vision that provides adequate resources to build core capacities of countries and resist the security approach to global health.

In addition Area Action 6 of the Draft Implementation Plan of the IHR pertains to biological samples and intersects with the scope of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol. This area relates to Rec. 11 of the IHR Review Committee which stresses on fair and equitable benefit sharing, and yet this aspect is absent.

We are concerned that WHO is undertaking activities such as bio-banking and development of material transfer agreements in the absence of discussion on matters related to the CBD and Nagoya Protocol in particular the aspect on fair and equitable benefit sharing. Moreover, the IHR does NOT require WHO Members to share biological samples.

We recommend that any activities concerning development of norms or mechanisms in relation to biological samples or sequence data should go through a Member State driven process that should also discuss the linkage with the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol in particular equitable benefit sharing. Pending Member State guidance on this matter, activities of area action 6 should be suspended.

Thank You