Public health for the future of humanity:
One planet, One people, One health

When a group of health professionals from China arrived at Malpensa Airport in northern Italy on 18th March to share their experience and learning in tackling Covid-19 and some essential medical supplies, they unfurled a banner “We are waves from the same sea, leaves from the same tree, flowers from the same garden”. Public health professionals around the world have been united working in solidarity for the common good and betterment of humankind, leading the scientific analysis and advise to decisionmakers, and on front lines in the field practically tackling the ongoing Covid-19 global public health emergency. People have gone to their balconies and front doors to applaud and convey their admiration and thanks for their work and other health professionals in these extraordinary times.

The 16th World Congress on Public Health is due to be held from 12 to 16 October 2020 as a fully online conference. The theme of the Congress “Public health for the future of humanity: analysis, advocacy and action” is even more relevant now than ever before.

The individual, community and institutions of society are key protagonists and chief stewards for health from whose values and interactions the future emerges. When the global pandemic was declared, the World Health Organization, in collaboration with the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response (GLOPID-R), organised a Global Forum on research and innovation for Covid-19 (‘Global Research Forum’). The WHO-GLOPID-R Covid-19 Global Research and Innovation Forum highlighted some key values in addressing the global pandemic, namely solidarity, equity, trust, autonomy, equal moral respect, and vulnerability. Such ethical principles were not intended for abstract philosophical arm chair debate but have significant implications for policy, research and practice at this time. There has been “a cry for ethical global leadership” to consider and address health inequity and to use the learning and experience from the global Covid-19 pandemic to build a just, healthier, and peaceful world. Public health is the work, art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised
efforts of society. At this time, there is urgent need to reconsider the organised efforts of society and role of individuals, communities and institutions which they serve.

What this global pandemic and other public health emergencies, such as climate change, clearly demonstrate is recognition of the interdependence and interconnectedness of all people in the world and their environments, and the need for unity, not only to overcome this common threat but also for building a healthy peaceful future for all humanity. Global cooperation and coordination during a pandemic outbreak can be considered both an epidemiological imperative and a moral duty, and the way we need to live and work together in the future. Such a world will need to address the scandalous social and economic inequities, which continue “to kill people on grand scale”\(^1\) and issues around race and gender which have direct impact on health and wellbeing and the right to health and human rights of all peoples.

There is urgent need to invest in public health and care services and work together as citizens of one planet to deliver the 2030 sustainable development goals, all of which have implications for our health and wellbeing.

Following World War 2, there was emergence of significant international and national organisations, such as the United Nations, UNICEF, World Bank, World Health Organization and other agencies calling for greater international cooperation. The science, the evidence and experience from the Covid 19 global pandemic clearly highlight our interconnectedness and our environments, the oneness of humankind and the case for a One Health approach to global health, and urgent need for evaluation and strengthening of international organisations to serve all people on our planet. The public health community throughout the world is united and stands ready and eager to support policymakers, individuals and communities in our common endeavour to build a just healthier future for humankind and the whole planet.

October 2020

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This is a statement by World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA), European Public Health Association (EUPHA), Italian Society of Hygiene, Preventive Medicine and Public Health (SItI), and UK faculty of public health (FPH).

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![European Union logo](image)

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# Supporting organisations

**National Associations (Alphabetical by country)**

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Bulgaria  Bulgarian Public Health Association

Cuba  Sociedad cubana de salud publica (SOCUSAP) - Cuban Society of Public Health

Cyprus  University of Nicosia Medical School - Department of Primary Care and Population Health

Georgia  School of Health Sciences and Public Health, University of Georgia

Germany  German Public Health Association - DGPH

Germany  German Society for Medical Sociology

Germany  Public Health Centre Fulda, Fulda University of Applied Sciences
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Portugal  Portuguese Association of Public Health Doctors (ANMSP, Associação Nacional dos Médicos de Saúde Pública)

Sénégal  Association des Professionnels de Santé Publique du Sénégal

Slovakia  SAVEZ - Slovak Public Health Association

Spain  SESPAS

Sweden  Swedish Association for Social Medicine and Public Health

United Kingdom  Faculty of public health

United Kingdom  Social Medicine and Population Health

United States  American Public Health Association
Vietnam
Vietnam Public Health Association

Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe Public Health Association.

International Federation of Medical Students’ Associations

International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH)

Health Care Without Harm

The International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI)

International Community of Health Management (INCOHEMA)

Good Clinical Practice Alliance - Europe (GCPA)
Strategic Initiative for Developing Capacity in Ethical Review (SIDCER)

Supporting organisations

Belgium  The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER)

European Partnership for improving Health, Equity and Wellbeing

Germany  Interdisciplinary Centre for Health Literacy Research, Bielefeld University

New Zealand Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand

Spain  Escuela Andaluza de Salud Pública (EASP)

Sweden  Swedish Organization for Global Health (SOGH)
United Kingdom

The Global Law Enforcement and Public Health Association


Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC)

European Federation of Psychology Students’ Associations (efpsa)

European Medical Students’ Association (EMSA)

the International Union for Health Promotion and Education

EUPHA nxt

EUPHA Child and adolescent health section
EUPHA Chronic diseases section

EUPHA Digital health section

EUPHA Environment and health section

EUPHA Ethics in public health section

EUPHA Health impact assessment section

EUPHA Health promotion section

EUPHA Health technology assessment section

EUPHA Health workforce research section

EUPHA Infectious diseases control section

EUPHA Injury prevention and safety promotion section
EUPHA Public health epidemiology section

EUPHA Migrant and ethnic minority health section

EUPHA Public health genomics section

EUPHA Public health monitoring and reporting section

EUPHA Public mental health section

EUPHA Urban public health section

**Individual support**

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