

**Draft**

**DECLARATION of**

**The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health**

**(Geneva, May 24, 2023)**

**We, the Ministers of Health of the member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) gathered on May 24, 2023, as a sideline of the 76th World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva, Switzerland**  **to attend the** **5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health, chaired by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan as to review progress and implementation status of the ECO Plan of Action on Health and revised the mentioned Plan of Action according to the new strategic plan of WHO for the next five years, and while:**

**EXPRESSING** our deep condolences on the approximately 6.9 million tragic losses of lives due to COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, expressing our appreciation on the recent declaration by WHO on ending global emergency status for COVID-19 pandemic;

**APPRECIATING** proactive and timely efforts of the Member States in controlling the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, including various urgent public health measures taken by our governments during COVID-19 pandemic;

**HIGHLIGHTING** the importance of being united to tackle the profound consequences of the communicable diseases as in the case of COVID-19 via regional collaboration in supporting national governments’ and authorities’ capacities to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats of regional concern and reducing health related risks;

**SUPPORTING ongoing innovations emanating from the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic to facilitate more effective pandemic prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, as well as** surveillance **of cross-border and internationally transmitted communicable diseases;**

**BEING aware of the significance of healthy and sustainable recovery which builds towards achieving and sustaining Universal Health Coverage (UHC) under the SDGs, and the importance of the UN General Assembly comprehensive review in 2023 on gaps and solutions to accelerate progress towards the achievements of UHC and emphasizing the need for strengthening primary health care as cornerstone of UHC;**

**RECOGNIZING the importance of exchange of experiences regarding the development of Primary Health Care structure in rural and urban areas and preparing a road map for the development of primary health care structure; cooperation for development of service packages in the primary health care system (physical and mental health, socially oriented measures);**

**AFFIRMING** our commitment on strengthening the implementation of proposed ECO Plan of Action on Health as well as Universal Health Coverage (UHC), envisaged at ECO Vision 2025 to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats and disasters through emergency preparedness, surveillance, and to provide cross-border epidemiological well-being and other public health capacities by promoting regional cooperation;

**EMPHASIZING the importance of implementation of the ECO Action Plan on Health with the reference to WHO strategic plan for next five years;**

**ACKNOWLEDGING the ongoing affords of ECO to collaborate with relevant international institutions such as WHO, UNESCAP, IFRC, TSO to improve health systems of the member states to facilitate to support global collaboration in public health issues;**

**CALLING for building ECO’s health system resilience, including through applicable regional health protocols, the development of manufacturing and  
strengthening research networks to attain vaccine security and self-reliance during peaceful times and emergency situations, for prevention, preparedness for current and future local, regional and global health crises which will contribute to the global health architecture strengthening;**

**CONSIDERING ECO Health coverage on promoting healthy lifestyle, responding to all hazards and emerging threats, strengthening health system and access to care;**

**RECOGNIZING the need for predictable and sustainable financing to support the development of health coverage in this region;**

**CALLING for key regional actions and mechanisms, such as the ECO Emergency Operations Centre Network (or Rapid response team) for Public Health Emergencies, ECO Risk Assessment and Risk Management;**

**APPRECIATING** the efforts of both host country and ECO to convene the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health as a sideline of the 76th WHA and welcoming all esteemed Ministry of Health from the member states to attend the meeting

**Have agreed to:**

**EXCHANGE** experiences regarding the development of Primary Health Care structure in rural and urban areas and preparing a road map for the development of primary health care structure; cooperation for service packages in the primary health care system; cooperation for development of the Electronic Health Records; collaboration to increase PHC resilience in crises and disaster;

**ADDRESS** the root cause of public health emergencies by utilizing the One Health approach – a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach interrelating human, animal, and environment – to conduct surveillance and early detection, act on  
potential zoonotic viral threats, prevent future outbreaks and minimize large-scale  
transmission risks;

**CARRY** out health related multi-hazard framework in the region for preparedness and response plan in all resilience disease and disaster and using a comprehensive disaster management approach, while ensuring the timely and effective assistance to the affected ones in a coordinated manner, and protecting people, property and livelihoods;

**EXPLORE** building public-private partnership network on pharmaceutical products  
and other medical supplies to enhance manufacturing capacity and sufficiency,  
whilst promoting knowledge sharing among ECO member states in identified projects;

**WORK** on improvement of emergency response plans; joint training; introducing affordable package of service delivery in public sector; education and national staff capacity building in clinical, diagnostic and management levels;

**EXCHANGE** of experts with the aim of joint risk assessment of border provinces; work of outbreak investigation and response teams; vaccination campaigns; WHO support in ensuring availability of short term and long-term resources; capacity building of emergency medical teams;

**FULFILL** the importance of ensuring availability of short and long-term resources to support member countries; and agreed to cooperate jointly to mobilize financial resources; and emphasized the high value and importance of WHO/Regional Offices for the Eastern Mediterranean and Europe to support ECO region especially on technical aspects and resource mobilization;

**COMMIT** to invest in and strengthen the ECO Regional Plan of Action through Universal Health Coverage, in particular primary health care and health workforce as strong foundations for global health security;

**STRENGTHEN** the community engagement and collaboration with non-state actors and private sector in the current response and improve preparedness for any future health emergencies; enhance the recovery process towards a more resilient world after the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as address the emerging issues on public health measures, medical services sustainability and social development among ECO member states and consider to build a safer world together by strengthening the Global Architecture for Health.