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COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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An European framework for the prevention of chronic diseases – a call for Europe´s to act

Motion for a recommendation
presented by Mrs Hurskainen and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

Despite today's unhealthy lifestyles and poor nutritional habits, few appropriate measures are currently being taken to address the increasing prevalence and personal and national cost burden of chronic diseases. Chronic diseases exist all over Europe but inequalities remain between different European countries, and the possibilities to receive remedies and assistance vary from country to country. The current situation calls for a joint pan-European approach including minimum standards for prevention, diagnosis and control to ensure that persons with chronic diseases do not face discrimination in access to care, access to work and in everyday life.

Diabetes is one of the most widespread chronic diseases and one of the major causes of death and premature death as well as of reduced quality of life for the citizens in Europe. Today, over 50 million people live with diabetes in Europe, with an average prevalence rate of 7.5 %. It is also estimated that 50% of people living with diabetes are unaware of their condition, leaving them exposed to the risks and costly complications associated with poor control of the illness. Type 1 diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases of children in many European countries. The increase of overweight and obesity especially among children and young people means that a growing number of children are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.The impact of Type 2 diabetes on and women in their early reproductive years is also of particular concern. While there is yet no conclusive evidence to suggest that type 1 diabetes can be prevented, primary prevention of type 2 diabetes is potentially possible. Apart from family history and increasing age, the main risk factors of Type 2 diabetes are excess body weight, a sedentary lifestyle and tobacco use, which can be influenced by taking action in respect of the underlying factors. Complications of all types of diabetes can be prevented or delayed with good quality of care.

The General Assembly of the United Nations passed in December 2006 a landmark Resolution recognizing the global threat of the diabetes epidemic. The General Assembly recognizes that diabetes is a chronic, debilitating and costly disease associated with severe complications, which poses severe risks for families. The GA recognized also the urgent need to pursue multilateral efforts to promote and improve human health, and provide access to treatment and health-care education and decided to designate 14 November, the current World Diabetes Day, as a United Nations Day, to be observed every year beginning in 2007.

The International Diabetes Federation European Region adopted in 2004 the Otocec Declaration to call European leaders to act in shaping policy and action to encourage European states to provide adequate prevention, diagnosis and control of diabetes. In addition to those 50 million people who have diabetes, it is estimated that a further 100 million have pre-diabetes of which 50% will develop diabetes within 5 years.

The GA invites all member states, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, as well as civil society including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to observe World Diabetes Day in an appropriate manner, in order to raise public awareness on diabetes and related complications as well as on its prevention and care, including through education and the mass media.

The GA encourages Member States to develop national policies for the prevention, treatment and care of diabetes in line with the sustainable development of their health-care systems

It is of utmost importance that the Council of Europe joins the common efforts against the burden of diabetes and observe World Diabetes Day in an appropriate manner.

We undersigned specifically call on the Council of Europe :

- to take immediate steps to develop a European recommendation on Diabetes prevention, diagnosis and care in co-operation with the WHO Europe Office, the European Union and the International Diabetes Federation IDF-European region.

- to encourage its member states to develop national diabetes plans

Signed [1]:

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1 SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
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