

Health emergency in Ukraine and refugee-receiving and -hosting countries, stemming from the Russian Federation's aggression

The Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution ES-11/1 of 2 March 2022 on aggression against Ukraine; United Nations General Assembly resolution ES-11/2 of 24 March 2022 on the humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine; as well as United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 49/1 of 4 March 2022 on the situation of human rights in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression;

Recalling also United Nations Security Council resolution 2286 (2016) on protection of the wounded and sick, medical personnel and humanitarian personnel in armed conflict; United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/182 (1991) on strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, and all relevant subsequent resolutions; resolution WHA65.20 (2012) on WHO's response, and role as the health cluster lead, in meeting the growing demands of health in humanitarian emergencies; and decision WHA69(9) (2016) on reform of WHO's work in health emergency management: WHO Health Emergencies Programme;

Welcoming the legally binding provisional measures order by the International Court of Justice of 16 March 2022, ordering the Russian Federation to immediately suspend the military operations that it commenced on 24 February 2022 in the territory of Ukraine;

Noting the adoption by the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, during its special session held on 10 May 2022, of a resolution on WHA75: health emergency in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, stemming from the Russian Federation's aggression,¹ calling upon the WHO Regional Director for Europe to consider temporarily suspending all regional meetings in the Russian Federation, including technical meetings and meetings of experts, as well as conferences and seminars whose composition is set by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, until peaceful resolution of the conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine is implemented and the Russian Federation withdraws its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders;

Recalling the Constitution of the World Health Organization and its references to the Charter of the United Nations; the obligation of all Members under Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations, and to settle their international disputes by peaceful means; and the obligation under Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, that all Members, in order to ensure the rights and benefits

¹ Resolution EUR/RCSS/R1.

resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the Charter;

Recalling also that health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity;

Reaffirming that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition, and that peace and security are critical to the attainment of this human right;

Recalling the functions of WHO, which include, inter alia, to furnish appropriate technical assistance and, in emergencies, necessary aid;

Recognizing the grave concern over the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine in statements by, inter alia, the United Nations Secretary-General¹ and the WHO Director-General;^{2,3}

Expressing grave concerns over the continuing health emergency in Ukraine and refugee-receiving and -hosting countries, triggered by the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, resulting in conflict-related trauma and injuries as well as increased risks of illness and death from noncommunicable diseases, of emergence and spread of infectious diseases, of mental health and psychosocial health deterioration, of human trafficking, of gender-based violence, and deterioration of sexual and reproductive health, including maternal and child health;

Alarmed in particular by the disproportionate impact of disrupted health services on vulnerable groups, such as women and children, internally displaced persons, elderly people and persons with disabilities;

Further alarmed by the health impacts of the Russian Federation's aggression, which have regional and wider-than-regional significance, including, inter alia: significant numbers of refugees fleeing Ukraine; the risks of radiological, biological and chemical events and hazards; and the exacerbation of an already significant global food security crisis;

Recalling the emergency appeal launched by WHO for Ukraine and refugee-receiving and -hosting countries on 3 March 2022,

1. CONDEMNS IN THE STRONGEST TERMS the Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine, including attacks on health care facilities documented via the WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care;

¹ United Nations Secretary-General's remarks at a press conference with the President of Ukraine on 28 April 2022 (<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/press-encounter/2022-04-28/secretary-generals-remarks-press-conference-president-volodymyr-zelenskyy-of-ukraine>).

² WHO Director-General's opening remarks at a WHO press conference on 13 April 2022 (<https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-who-press-conference-13-April-2022>).

³ WHO Director-General's remarks at the special session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe on 10 May 2022 (<https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/WHO-Director-Generals-remarks-at-Special-Session-of-the-WHO-Regional-Committee-for-Europe-10-May-2022>).

2. **DRAWS ATTENTION** to the fact that the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine constitutes exceptional circumstances, causing a serious impediment to the health of the population of Ukraine, as well as having regional and wider-than-regional health impacts;
3. **URGES** the Russian Federation to immediately cease any attacks on hospitals and other health care facilities;
4. **ALSO URGES** the Russian Federation to fully respect and protect all medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, and their means of transport and equipment;
5. **FURTHER URGES** respect for and protection of the sick and wounded, including civilians, health and humanitarian aid workers, and health care systems consistent with the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, and with broader international humanitarian law;
6. **DECIDES** that continued action by the Russian Federation to the detriment of the health situation in Ukraine, at regional and global levels, would necessitate that the Health Assembly should consider the application of relevant articles of the WHO Constitution;
7. **URGES** the relevant Member States:
 - (1) to adhere to international humanitarian law, international human rights law and WHO norms and standards;
 - (2) to allow and facilitate safe, rapid and unhindered access to populations in need of assistance by staff deployed by WHO on the ground, and by all other medical and humanitarian personnel;
 - (3) to ensure the free flow of essential medicines, medical equipment and other health technologies in all conflict and non-conflict areas;
8. **ENCOURAGES** all Member States:
 - (1) to increase contributions to the WHO emergency appeal for Ukraine and refugee-receiving and -hosting countries, to the WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies, and to WHO's work in other health emergencies, many of which have been exacerbated by the Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine;
 - (2) to maintain or increase support for the United Nations-led response to address the health and other urgent needs of the people of Ukraine and mitigate the negative health impact of the conflict, as well as other critical relief efforts around the globe;
9. **REQUESTS** the Director-General:
 - (1) to make available the staffing, financial resources and leadership support needed across all three levels of the Organization for an effective and accountable humanitarian and emergency health response, including critical health cluster functions, under the leadership of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme, and in line with relevant Health Assembly resolutions;
 - (2) to ensure that the health response under WHO's leadership on the ground adheres to the best standards on prevention of and response to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment and, in

collaboration with other agencies, provide adequate health care and support to the victims, and document cases of sexual abuse, including by the military;

(3) to continue supporting the health sectors of Ukraine and refugee-receiving and -hosting countries using a health system approach, including through capacity-building programmes in preparedness for and response to trauma care and mass casualties as well as in maintenance of basic health services and the promotion of access thereto in a context of conflict;

(4) to support the sustainable procurement of essential medicines, medical equipment and other health technologies;

(5) to pursue the monitoring, collection, documentation and dissemination of data on attacks on health care facilities, health workers, health transports and patients in Ukraine;

(6) to assess, in full cooperation with health cluster partners and other relevant United Nations agencies, the extent and nature of psychiatric morbidity, and other forms of mental health problems, resulting from the protracted situation in Ukraine and refugee-receiving and -hosting countries;

(7) to ensure the allocation of adequate human and financial resources in order to achieve these objectives;

(8) to submit to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly in 2023, through the Executive Board at its 152nd session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including an assessment of the direct and indirect impact of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine on the health of the population of Ukraine, as well as regional and wider-than-regional health impacts.

Eighth plenary meeting, 28 May 2022
A75/VR/8

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