

# ALMATY ACCLAMATION OF MAYORS: CITIES AT THE FRONTLINE OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FOR ALL

WHO European Healthy Cities Network  
Summit of Mayors  
Almaty, Kazakhstan, 23–24 October 2018



## Reaffirming the commitment

1. We, the participants of the WHO Healthy Cities Summit of Mayors, through this Almaty Acclamation of Mayors, on 24 October 2018, forty years later, reaffirm our commitment to the definition of health in the WHO constitution, the values and principles of a primary health care approach as enshrined in the Alma Ata Declaration (1978), and the notion that health and well-being of the people is one of the most important social goals requiring engagement from all sectors. We recognize that of the utmost importance is the role of cities, urban places, and local governments in achieving them.

## Leading by example

2. We acknowledge that cities contribute to this pursuit in many ways, including, by creating the physical, social, cultural, and economic places and environments that facilitate improved health and well-being; by supporting primary health care and local services, including social and education services, that contribute to the development of human capital; and by growing and nurturing thriving, empowered, and resilient communities that are engaged and involved in the decisions that affect them and their future. We will lead by example.

## Defending social justice and sustainable development

3. We uphold the need to promote and defend equity, social justice, gender equality and to leaving no one behind as called for in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its 17 global goals (SDGs). These cannot be achieved without cities and local governments. We will be their champions.

## Realizing the vision

4. Through this statement, we reaffirm our commitment to the *Copenhagen Consensus of Mayors: Healthier and Happier Cities for All*, that was adopted at the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Summit of Mayors in Copenhagen, Denmark on 12–13 February 2018, and the *Shanghai Consensus on Healthy Cities*, adopted at the WHO 9<sup>th</sup> Global Conference on Health Promotion held in Shanghai, China, on 21–24 November 2016. These places cities, urban places, and local governments, at the centre of the pursuit of improved health and well-being for all. We will be the implementers.

## Primary Health Care is the foundation of universal health coverage and attaining the SDGs, and cities are at the forefront

5. We, cities, urban places, and local governments, commit to contribute to the strengthening and reorienting of health systems, based on the primary health care approach, in order to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), overcome inequities and barriers to access, improve health, and attain the SDGs. Primary health care reinforces the ability of countries, cities and communities to achieve UHC as outlined in the 2030 Agenda and several high level declarations and documents adopted at the global and regional levels afterwards.

6. Healthy Cities put the townhall at the heart of health and well-being and primary health care. We commit to ensuring that the townhalls throughout the WHO Healthy Cities Network strive to support the Astana Declaration, to ensure that it is successful in its bold ambitions.
7. We emphasize that universal health coverage - ensuring that all people and communities receive the quality services they need, and are protected from health threats without financial hardship - is a central pillar of the 13<sup>th</sup> WHO General Programme of Work 2019–2023, cannot be achieved without collaboration with and support from cities and local governments, and we commit to facilitating the necessary drive towards UHC throughout our communities across the globe.
8. We as cities, urban places, and local governments, commit to addressing the determinants of health and prioritizing the most vulnerable members of society, notably women and children, older people those affected by emergencies, refugees and migrants, and marginalized, stigmatized, and minority populations. We further commit to investing in health and well-being and supporting strengthened systems of governance for health and well-being for all, with enhanced transparency and accountability.

### **Healthy Cities: the golden child of Alma-Ata**

9. We pay tribute to the role of the 1978 Alma-Ata Declaration on Primary Healthcare in the birth of the WHO healthy cities movement, and note the significance of reaffirming our commitment to the principles of the declaration on its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in the same year that the healthy cities movement celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> year. Neither can be achieved without support from the other. Through Healthy Cities, the legacy of Alma-Ata and primary health care lives on.
10. Healthy cities is based on the values and principles that also underpin primary health care; equity, justice, community engagement, empowerment, participation, and collaboration. It provides a vehicle to ensure these values permeate through healthy cities, and are transposed through the network across the region.
11. The Alma-Ata Declaration and primary health care requires engagement with people and communities. Cities and the local level are closer to the people than the national level. It is through our cities and local government that we can engage, empower, and involve all people in the decisions that affect their health and well-being through whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches. We will use services and all means available to us to reach out and engage people.

### **Healthy cities: From local to global and global to local**

12. Healthy cities implement global policies at the local level, and ensure local priorities are present at the global level. Cities are global actors, and through city health diplomacy it is necessary to ensure that there is coherence horizontally across government, and vertically between all levels of government, from the international level through to the city, municipal, and local levels, as this is where implementation happens and interaction with people occurs. The WHO Healthy Cities Network facilitates this cycle from global to local to global.

## **We support the call for immediate action, because together we can create a healthier, happier and more sustainable future**

13. Forty years ago, the Declaration of Alma-Ata inspired a generation of health leaders and professionals through a shared commitment to achieve Health for All. Through this statement, we fully reiterate and stand behind the Call to Action in the Astana Declaration, and acknowledge our central role in fulfilling it
14. With this Almaty Acclamation of Mayors, we the participants at the WHO Healthy Cities Summit of Mayors, a pre-conference event to the Global Conference on Primary Health Care, 25–27 October 2018 in Astana, Kazakhstan, support the call for coordinated local, national and international action, increased technical and financial resources, and their alignment, to support a renewed commitment to implementing primary health care policies, strategies, and plans.
15. We, as cities, urban places, and local governments:
  - will support immediate action on the Astana Declaration, in coordination with the World Health Organization and the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, engaging with leaders and all relevant sectors and levels of government, United Nations agencies, other international organizations, bilateral and multilateral funding agencies and donors, academia, and civil society;
  - urge international development partners, and national partners, sub-national and local partners, and civil society to work together to enhance transparency and accountability;
  - will work with all other levels of government, with other cities and within our cities in order to achieve health and well-being for all, leaving no one behind.

**Now is the time to act. We cannot afford to fail.**

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