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Health Ministers' Forum: "Health Development  
Action for South East Europe"

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# The Dubrovnik Pledge:

## **Meeting the Health Needs of Vulnerable Populations in South East Europe**

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## **Meeting the Health Needs of Vulnerable Populations in South East Europe**

We the Ministers of Health of South East Europe (SEE), gathered here today at the Health Ministers' Forum for Regional Health Development Action in South East Europe recognize the damaging effects on health of recent wars, continuing unrest and conflict, as well as the economic hardships faced by the populations of SEE during their countries' transition to market economies. We accept the challenge to play a key role in strengthening the fundamental human rights of our societies and of vulnerable populations and individuals within them to effective health care, social wellbeing and human development, in line with the principles of the World Health Organization and the Council of Europe.

### **Focus on specific strategies**

We, the Ministers of Health of: Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Romania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and the Federal Secretary for Labour, Health and Social Welfare of Yugoslavia commit ourselves through government action to the following goals.

**WE WILL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP** with relevant national and international bodies and organizations: to ensure equity, health gain and a better quality of life and health care (including reduced inequalities in its infrastructure and balanced primary and secondary services and public health interventions for the populations of SEE); and to collaborate on issues of common concern, including the harmonization of policies, legislation and information systems, institutional capacity building and networking to build an infrastructure to pursue regional goals and future European integration.

**WE WILL MEET THE HEALTH NEEDS OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS IN SEE**, mobilizing human and financial resources to the extent possible to:

- increase citizens' access to appropriate, affordable and high-quality health care services;
- intensify social cohesion by strengthening community mental health services;
- increase the quality of and regional self-sufficiency in the provision of safe blood and blood products;
- develop integrated emergency health care services that are offered free of charge to the user;
- strengthen the surveillance and control of communicable diseases;
- strengthen institutional capacity and intersectoral collaboration for access to affordable and safe food products; and
- establish regional networks and systems for the collection and exchange of social and health information.

### **Plea to international stakeholders**

The Health Ministers' Forum for Regional Health Development Action in South East Europe recognizes the need for assistance from international stakeholders to achieve the goals of this Pledge.

**WE LOOK TO** the Council of Europe and the World Health Organization for strategic guidance in developing mechanisms to coordinate partnership with national and international agencies in the fulfilment of this Pledge and request their support in organizing a first meeting to monitor and evaluate the progress achieved by such partnership.

**WE ASK THAT** the international community assist, within the framework of the Stability Pact for South East Europe, by providing resources to support the implementation of the above-mentioned urgent action areas for health reconstruction and development. In so doing, we commit ourselves to transparency and dedication in the implementation and reporting of all project activities and their results.

**WE REQUEST** that the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe and the Council of Europe report to their governing bodies about this Pledge and the progress achieved towards its goals.

## **SIGNATORIES**

| <b>Albania</b>  | <b>Romania</b>  |
|---|---|
| <p>.....</p> <p>Ms Ruki Kondaj<br/>Secretary General of the Ministry of Health<br/>for The Minister of Health of Albania</p>  | <p>.....</p> <p>Dr Daniela Bartos<br/>Minister of Health of Romania</p>   |
| <b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>   | <b>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>  |
| <p>.....</p> <p>Dr Zelko Misanovic<br/>Minister of Health of the Federation<br/>of Bosnia and Herzegovina</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Dr Milorad Balaban<br/>Minister of Health of the Republika Srpska</p> | <p>.....</p> <p>Professor Petar Milosevski<br/>Minister of Health<br/>of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</p>  |
| <b>Bulgaria</b>   | <b>Yugoslavia</b>   |
| <p>.....</p> <p>Dr Bojidar Finkov<br/>Minister of Health of Bulgaria</p>  | <p>.....</p> <p>Dr Miodrag Kovac<br/>Federal Secretary for Labour,<br/>Health and Social Welfare of<br/>Yugoslavia</p>  |
| <b>Croatia</b>  | <b>For the Secretariat of the Meeting</b>   |
| <p>.....</p> <p>Dr Ana Stavljenic Rukavina<br/>Minister of Health of Croatia</p>  | <p>.....</p> <p>Mrs Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni<br/>Director General for Social Cohesion<br/>Council of Europe</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Dr Marc Danzon<br/>Regional Director for Europe<br/>World Health Organization</p> |

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