

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

29.3.2006

B6-0231/2006

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by John Bowis, Anders Wijkman and Eija-Riitta Korhola

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on World Health Day

B6-0231/2006

European Parliament resolution on World Health Day

The European Parliament,

- having regard to World Health Day on 7 April 2006, which will be devoted to healthcare workers,
 - having regard to the Health Workforce Decade (2006-2015), which will be launched on World Health Day,
 - having regard to the Commission’s Communication on an EU Strategy for Action on the Crisis in Human Resources for Health in Developing Countries, adopted on 12 December 2005,
 - having regard to the High-Level Forum on the Health MDGs held in Abuja in December 2004, and to its conclusions,
 - having regard to the Development Policy Statement signed by the Commission, Council and Parliament in December 2005,
 - having regard to the World Bank report on healthcare ‘Reaching the Poor: What Works, What Doesn’t and Why’, published on 7 December 2005,
 - having regard to the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS) in June 2001, and its forthcoming Comprehensive Review and High-Level Meeting in June 2006,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas there is a grave shortage of health workers in many parts of the developing world, with migration both from and within poorer regions,
- B. whereas the shortage of human resources in the healthcare sector constitutes an emergency which not only affects developing countries, but also has ramifications for Europe and all other states in the world, not least in the event of potential pandemic scenarios,
- C. whereas the European Union has an important role to play in providing and supporting an international response, which must be given rapidly,
- D. whereas HIV/AIDS has contributed to increasing levels of ill health in society in general and developing countries in particular, with particularly damaging effects on the health sector, including losses of health workers,

1. Welcomes the celebration on 7 April of World Day of Health, which is focused on the shortage of health workers and represents an opportunity for the European Union to make a significant contribution to both human health and development;
2. Reaffirms that the crisis in human resources for health is an issue of fundamental importance which the European Union needs to tackle promptly; stresses that health emergencies in developing countries such as HIV/AIDS and malaria can only be effectively addressed if the wider problems of poorly functioning health systems, including shortage of health workers, are given highest priority;
3. Welcomes the EU Strategy for Action on the Crisis in Human Resources for Health in Developing Countries;
4. Supports the actions proposed in the EU Strategy for Action to reverse the loss of health workers from developing countries through measures such as better training, career opportunities and remuneration, retention incentives, safe working conditions, cooperation with disease-specific initiatives, twinning arrangements, voluntary support and the dissemination of best practice and technical support;
5. Recognises the urgent need for improving harmonisation of donor assistance – within the EU as well as at a global level – and agrees that budget support linked to sufficiently clear performance indicators can be an efficient way of improving harmonisation as well as of increasing predictability and recipient country ownership;
6. Stresses the need for EU and international support for regional cooperation to promote skill sharing, training, capacity building, comparison of best practice and pooling of resources; underlines that such cooperation can be particularly useful in addressing difficult health situations in post-conflict or post-disaster situations;
7. Recognises that one major reason for this problematic situation in the developing countries is migration of health workers who are recruited by wealthier countries (especially EU countries and the USA), and calls for the EU to promote the development of a global Code of Conduct for Ethical Recruitment;
8. Believes that the first step in combating this trend is to provide training and better working conditions for health workers in the areas concerned, to offer incentives to encourage them to work where they are most needed and to supply them with vaccinations in anticipation of potential pandemics;
9. Calls on developing countries to restore their public and basic healthcare systems and services and for the EU to support this process through aid for the reinforcement of human and institutional capacities and infrastructure, including an improvement in working conditions for medical staff, provision of suitable medical equipment and transfer of technology;
10. Calls for effective health workforce planning in all EU Member States in order to meet internal demand and minimise the negative implications for its neighbours, African countries and other affected nations;

11. Believes that one priority for the EU, in order to remedy shortages of healthcare workers in various Member States, is to maintain and raise the number of healthcare workers by a series of measures such as encouragement of professional mobility in the EU, provision of better working conditions, increased support in the form of investment in training and the development of effective incentive schemes which must be based on research, analysis and consultation of health workers;
12. Calls on the EU to take a leading role in the UNGASS High-Level Meeting in New York in June and to press all participants to live up to their commitments in order to strive for universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member State Heads of Government, the Heads of Government of all developing countries, and the World Health Organisation.