Meeting: Seventy-second World Health Assembly (A72/1)

Agenda Item: 11.6 Health, environment and climate change

Statement:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak for the Alliance for Health Promotion a global coalition of CSOs from diverse sectors active in Health Promotion. The A4HP strongly advocates for health promotion strategies aimed at empowering individuals and communities to take control over their own health and wellbeing.

Air pollution, global warming and climate change are all interrelated. Together they have a huge adverse psychosocial, economic and health impact on individuals and communities. Air pollution affects all age groups and the effects start from womb to tomb. Suspended particulate matter, tobacco smoke, chemicals from aerosols are major pollutants in addition to synthetic chemicals-neurotoxic and endocrine disruption. Similarly, we need to deal effectively with pharmaceutical waste and nano-materials.

The actions of humans contribute in a major way to this problem. Thus, deliberate, concerted and sustainable strategies must be put in place to stop further deterioration and start the journey to recovery.

Among these strategies should be:

- Quality education of the public, policy makers, technocrats and professionals on the disease and economic burden of environment
- Reduce air pollution and usage of fossil fuels by setting strict guidelines, regulating automobile emissions, promoting mass transportation and supporting use of alternative energy
- Increase greenery
- Encourage traditional food habits with more antioxidants
- Manage population growth and rapid urbanisation

Therefore, the A4HP urges member states, WHO, CSOs and private sector to take seriously this challenge. The draft WHO global strategy developed for this WHA together with strategies suggested in this statement should be an adequate starting point for taking measures aimed at reversing the health effects of climate change.

Thank you.