



Asia-Pacific
PARLIAMENTARIAN FORUM
on **Global Health**

Building Primary Health Care for the Future

ULAANBAATAR COMMUNIQUE

We, Parliamentarians, representing 15 countries across the Asia-Pacific Region, gathered at the Seventh Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum on Global Health (APFPGH) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 21 to 23 August 2023, on the theme of *Building Primary Health Care for the Future*;

1. *Welcoming* this opportunity to meet in person in Ulaanbaatar to discuss our roles as parliamentarians and our individual and collective contribution to building strong and sustainable health systems focused on primary health care (PHC);
2. *Recognising* that as an inclusive, effective, and efficient way to enhance people's physical and mental health, as well as social well-being, PHC is the cornerstone of a sustainable health system for health security, universal health coverage and health-related Sustainable Development Goals;
3. *Encouraging* innovation and ideas, and recognising their potential to accelerate PHC reform with a supportive financial, governance and policy environment;
4. *Expressing concern* that progress on certain health outcomes in the region has not been distributed equitably within and across countries and many health systems may not have the capacity to deliver for present or future health needs;
5. *Acknowledging* that many people and communities face barriers to accessing needed health services at the primary level due to lack of access, cost, perceptions of poor quality and lack of trust;
6. *Noting* that the health needs of our populations are changing due to social and demographic transitions, increasing demands on our health systems;
7. *Recognizing* that achieving patient-centric, high-quality and effective PHC will require a paradigm shift in the way PHC systems are designed, funded, managed and delivered;
8. *Recognizing* also that PHC systems need to be resilient and to serve as the first line of defence against public health threats.
9. *Emphasizing* that prioritizing PHC is essential to secure the financial sustainability of health systems and is a critical investment in the health, social and economic development of the countries we serve;

10. *Recognizing* that PHC requires whole-of-society and whole-of-government strategies that engage and empower communities, and that PHC reforms would yield compound benefits around outcomes in other sectors;
11. *Expressing* appreciation to the State Great Hural of Mongolia, with support from the Ministry of Health, for hosting the Seventh Meeting and demonstrating national and regional leadership in building PHC for the future; and
12. *Acknowledging* the technical leadership of the World Health Organization in making PHC one of the top priorities for health and wellbeing in the Asia-Pacific Region and around the world.

Urge our fellow parliamentarians to:

1. *Advocate* for renewed focus on the economic, social and environmental determinants of health in all our relevant portfolios, policies and projects to improve health outcomes and health equity, and as an investment in our social and economic wellbeing;
2. *Encourage and promote* a supportive environment for innovation, including sustainable financing and strong governance, to transform existing health systems towards PHC.
3. *Promote* legal and regulatory changes to drive and guide PHC reforms, including to strengthen health governance and coordination, support community participation, engage the private sector, improve quality of care, and promote services for vulnerable groups;
4. *Advocate* for increased national appropriations for public health functions and realignment of health financing to reduce the financial pressure of health on our populations and make health systems financially sustainable for the future;
5. *Represent* the interests of our constituencies to ensure that the needs of all are met and to ensure inclusive participation, especially groups like women and children, in PHC services;
6. *Provide* oversight and scrutiny to maintain government accountability and transparency in the implementation of policies for strengthening PHC;
7. *Advocate* for the strengthening of parliamentary processes and institutions, such as committees, for the consideration and scrutiny of primary health care across policies;
8. *Seek* opportunities individually or collectively to advance the aim of the APPFGH to demonstrate regional leadership in advocating for stronger PHC; and
9. *Engage* in international partnerships, platforms, and coalitions, including the APPFGH, to share experiences between countries and strengthen international cooperation for PHC.

Request the Secretariat to:

1. *Provide* guidance and technical assistance to countries as needed and requested in their efforts to undertake PHC reforms and build PHC for the future;
2. *Develop and share* knowledge products and practical examples for parliamentarians in leveraging their function to provide national and regional leadership in PHC reform, and in other functions, such as making the case for health as a smart investment; and

3. *Continue to strengthen* engagement with parliaments, including through the APPFGH, to enhance the role of parliamentarians in providing leadership for building strong and sustainable health systems focused on PHC.

We adopt this Ulaanbaatar Communiqué on 23 August 2023 as the outcome statement of the Seventh Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum on Global Health.

DRAFT