



**World Health  
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

Copenhagen and Moscow, 10 September 2010

## **WHO Regional Committee for Europe to convene in Moscow**

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*Health ministers and decision-makers from 53 countries will lay ground for a new pan-European health policy.*

Over 300 representatives from the 53 Member States in the WHO European Region will meet in Moscow, Russian Federation on 13–16 September 2010 for the annual session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe. Hosted by the Government of the Russian Federation, the conference will discuss strategies and action plans to tackle public health issues on the national and regional levels.

Confirmed speakers include Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General; Tatiana Golikova, Minister of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation; John Dalli, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy; and over 20 health ministers from countries in the European Region. The Regional Committee session will be open to accredited journalists (see registration information in notes to editors).

“Across the WHO European Region, even the wealthiest countries are wrestling with the task of adapting to new financial realities to better respond to existing health challenges. Through stronger regional cooperation and increased knowledge sharing, national health systems can be better equipped to tackle the health effects of the economic crisis and the high burden of disease, as well as health emergencies,” says Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director for Europe.

Health inequalities between and within countries are rising in the European Region, and governments need to pay even closer attention to the needs of vulnerable populations and to social determinants of health. *The European health report 2009* – a recent publication of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, released in Russian for the first time – confirms that poverty continues to be the biggest threat to people’s health, regardless of a country’s level of development. According to the report, the gap in healthy life expectancy between some WHO European Member States is as high as 21 years.

The Regional Committee session will feature ministerial panel discussions. Representatives will discuss a wide range of issues in health development and health policy, including:

- development of a new European health policy for the WHO European Region;
- adaptation of the work of the WHO Regional Office for Europe to the changing European environment;
- the future of the European environment and health process;
- health in cooperation on foreign policy and development;
- partnerships for health in the WHO European Region;
- strategic partnership between the Regional Office and the European Commission;
- the future of financing for WHO; and
- eradication of poliomyelitis and elimination of measles and rubella in the WHO European Region.

The session will also feature briefings on global health and health diplomacy, the social determinants of health, the health-related Millennium Development Goals, the impact of the financial crisis on health and health systems, and countries' health policies, strategies and plans.

All plenary sessions and briefings will be open to representatives of the media and simultaneous interpretation will be provided in English, French, German and Russian.

**For further information and interview requests, please contact:**

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