GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 30 November [meeting 58], the General Assembly adopted resolution 60/35 [draft: A/60/L.26 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 120].

Enhancing capacity-building in global public health

The General Assembly,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, and the development goals contained therein, in particular the health-related development goals, and its resolutions 58/3 of 27 October 2003 and 59/27 of 23 November 2004,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome, adopted by Heads of State and Government at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, held in New York from 14 to 16 September 2005, including the commitments on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other health issues,

Recognizing that health is central to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including all those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that such goals create an opportunity to position health as a core part of the development agenda and to raise political commitment and financial resources for the sector,

Noting with concern the deleterious impact on humankind of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other major infectious diseases and epidemics, and the heavy disease burden borne by poor people, especially in developing countries, including the least developed countries, as well as with countries with economies in transition, and in this regard noting with appreciation the work of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, its co-sponsoring agencies and the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria,

Also noting with concern the serious damage and loss of life caused by natural disasters and their negative impact on public health and health systems,

Bearing in mind the fact that the fight against new and re-emerging diseases, such as the severe acute respiratory syndrome and a human influenza pandemic arising from avian influenza, is far from over, and in this regard welcoming the efforts of the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Organization for Animal Health in developing international strategies and collaboration, as well as the recent appointment by the Secretary-General of a Senior United Nations System Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza,

Emphasizing that Member States have primary responsibility for strengthening their capacity-building in public health to detect and respond rapidly to outbreaks of major infectious diseases, through the establishment and improvement of effective public health mechanisms, while recognizing that the magnitude of the necessary response may be beyond the capabilities of many countries, in particular developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition,

Convinced that strengthening public health systems is critical to the development of all Member States and that economic and social development are enhanced through measures that strengthen capacity-building in public health, including strategies for training, recruitment and retention of sufficient public health personnel, and systems of prevention and of immunization against infectious diseases,

Acknowledging that rapid progress will require political commitment and a scaling-up of more efficient and effective strategies and actions, greater investment of financial resources, adequately staffed and effective health systems, capacity-building in the public and private sectors, a clear focus on equity in access and outcomes, and collective action within and between countries,

Recognizing the need to strengthen national health and social infrastructures to reinforce measures to eliminate discrimination in access to public health, information and education for all people, especially for the most underserved and vulnerable groups,

Recognizing also the need for greater international and regional cooperation to meet new and existing challenges to public health, in particular in promoting effective measures such as safe, affordable and accessible vaccines, as well as assisting developing countries in securing vaccines against preventable infectious diseases and supporting the development of new vaccines,

Welcoming the Doha Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and Public Health, adopted on 14 November 2001, and noting the decision of the World Trade Organization General Council of 30 August 2005 on the implementation of paragraph 6 of the Declaration,

Recognizing the expertise of the World Health Organization and its role in, inter alia, coordinating actions with Member States in the areas of information exchange, personnel training, technical support, resource utilization, the improvement of global public health preparedness and response mechanisms and stimulating and advancing work on the prevention, control and eradication of epidemic, endemic and other diseases, as well as the work of the World Health Organization office dedicated to communicable disease surveillance and response,

Welcoming the efforts of the World Health Organization, in cooperation with Member States, the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions, the private sector and civil society, in enhancing capacity-building in global public health and in promoting public health at the country level,

Underscoring the importance of the International Health Regulations (2005), adopted by the World Health Assembly in its resolution 58.3 of 23 May 2005, as an instrument for ensuring the maximum possible protection against the international spread of diseases with minimum interference in international traffic,

1. Urges Member States to further integrate public health into their national economic and social development strategies, including through the establishment and improvement of effective public health mechanisms, in particular networks of disease surveillance, response, control, prevention, treatment and information exchange and the recruitment and training of national public health personnel;

2. Urges Member States and the international community to increase investment, building on existing mechanisms and through partnership, to improve health systems in developing countries and countries with economies in transition with the aim of providing sufficient health workers, infrastructures, manage-