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Agenda item 24

Eradication of poverty and other development issues

Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh and Ireland: draft resolution*

Vision for Everyone: accelerating action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, ensuring that no one is left behind, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Recognizing the important contribution that the promotion of eye health can make to accelerating action towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing also that the contributions of persons with disabilities are important to the full and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and noting the need for Member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders to further strengthen the normative framework on disability, including the rights of persons with disabilities, in line with the pledge of leaving no one behind, and to consider disability as a global issue, cutting across the pillars of the United Nations,

Noting that at least 2 billion people are living with vision impairment or blindness and 1.1 billion people have vision impairment that could have been prevented or is yet to be addressed, and that global eye care needs are projected to increase substantially, with half the global population expected to be living with a vision impairment by 2050,

Reaffirming the right of every human being, without distinction of any kind, to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health,

* In order for the General Assembly to take action on the present proposal, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 24.



Recalling the high-level meeting on universal health coverage, held in New York on 23 September 2019, and reaffirming its political declaration, entitled “Universal health coverage: moving together to build a healthier world”,¹ including the commitment therein to strengthen efforts to address eye health conditions as part of universal health coverage,

Welcoming the adoption of World Health Assembly resolution 73.4 of 3 August 2020, entitled “Integrated people-centred eye care, including preventable vision impairment and blindness”,² in which Member States are urged, taking into account their national circumstances and priorities, inter alia, to take action to implement the recommendations contained in the World Health Organization *World Report on Vision*, including to make eye care an integral part of universal health coverage and to implement integrated people-centred eye care in health systems across the spectrum of promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services,

Acknowledging the significance of raising awareness and engaging and empowering people and communities in respect of eye care needs and the importance of vision for all,

Noting with concern the threat to human health, safety and well-being caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has spread all around the globe, as well as the unprecedented and multifaceted effects of the pandemic, including the disruption of essential health services, and recognizing the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the health, social and economic situation of persons with blindness and vision impairments,

Acknowledging that improving eye health will support efforts to build a more equitable, inclusive, sustainable and resilient future,

Expressing appreciation for the efforts made by Member States, the United Nations system, including the World Health Organization, and international partners in recent years to prevent and address vision impairment and eye health conditions, but mindful of the need for further action,

Noting with appreciation the work of the Friends of Vision Group, an informal network of Member States sharing knowledge and information on eye health and working to advance the issue of vision within the 2030 Agenda,

Recognizing that improved vision and optimized functional ability for people with blindness or vision impairment leads to improvement in employment prospects, enhanced workplace productivity, increased household income and spending and enhanced economic productivity, and that these economic benefits, particularly when delivered in low-resource areas, can be instrumental in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture) and Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all),

Acknowledging that eye care services as part of universal health coverage are relevant to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages), noting that vision loss leads to an increased risk of mortality and affects mental health and well-being, and recognizing the need to ensure access to a quality standard of eye care, and other affordable and accessible assistive technology, and that health-care services are inclusive and accessible for all,

¹ Resolution 74/2.

² World Health Organization, document WHA73.4.

Recognizing that access to eye care is essential to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) and has a positive impact on school enrolment, educational attainment, learning and the achievement of inclusive education systems,

Recognizing also that vision is an important contributor to child development, and underscoring the need for appropriate legal, social and physical infrastructures to ensure that eye health care is provided in the best interest of every child, while conscious that support from family members, friends and other caregivers has a positive influence on those with vision impairment,

Expressing concern that the burden of eye health conditions has a disproportionate impact on people in vulnerable situations, including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, local communities, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants, slowing progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries),

Expressing concern also that the prevalence of vision impairment is higher among women, and stressing the need to achieve gender equality in eye health and in access to eye care in order to ensure progress on Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls),

Recognizing that the risk of vision loss increases with age and that many older persons live with vision impairments or blindness, while noting the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) and the need to ensure that issues of relevance to older persons are taken into account in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

Noting the importance of good vision for road safety and its contribution, inter alia, to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11 (Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable),

Affirming that the realization of “Vision for Everyone” will make a crucial contribution to the 2030 Agenda and achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and development, and to ensuring that no one is left behind,

1. *Calls upon* Member States to ensure access to eye care services for their population and to mobilize the necessary resources and support in this regard, in order to contribute to global efforts to reach, by 2030, at least 1.1 billion people who have a vision impairment and currently do not have access to the eye care services that they need;

2. *Calls upon* Member States and other stakeholders to include persons with disabilities, including those with visual impairments, in all stages of policymaking and decision-making, as well as to eliminate barriers and discrimination against persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls and those in vulnerable situations, in accessing support and health-care services on an equal basis with others;

3. *Encourages* Member States to put in place an integrated and whole-of-government approach to eye care, building synergies with other development priorities and strengthening their collaboration with academia, research institutions, the scientific community, civil society and the private sector, in order to improve safe and affordable access to eye care services;

4. *Invites* international financial institutions and donors to provide appropriate targeted finances, especially for developing countries, to address the increasing impact of vision loss on sustainable development and to build an international campaign on eye health towards the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals and leaving no one behind by 2030;

5. *Recognizes* the need to further encourage the transfer of technology from developed countries to developing countries, on mutually agreed terms, to advance access to eye care services and assistive technologies;

6. *Notes* the contribution of the private sector, academia and civil society to the promotion of eye health, and encourages the development of public-private partnerships, aligned with national government plans, legislation, contexts and priorities, and national policies and priorities to advance vision for everyone;

7. *Encourages* Member States to consider addressing the situation of eye health in their voluntary national reviews presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

8. *Invites* the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators to review and consider in the context of the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, at the fifty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission, to be held in 2025, the feasible global indicators on eye health included in World Health Assembly resolution 73.4, as a mechanism for monitoring and reporting on progress towards Vision for Everyone and its contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;³

9. *Encourages* the World Health Organization and other relevant entities of the United Nations development system, including but not limited to the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), as well as the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, within their respective mandates, to support global efforts to achieve Vision for Everyone in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the steps necessary to effectively coordinate and follow up on the implementation of the present resolution and, in this regard, to consider briefing the General Assembly on its implementation, as appropriate.

³ Resolution [70/1](#).