

The Ashgabat Statement

Preventing the re-establishment of malaria transmission in the WHO European Region

Acknowledging that the WHO European Region is the first region in the world to have achieved interruption of indigenous malaria transmission, as declared by the WHO Regional Director for Europe on 20 April 2016, we appreciate the support and role of WHO and partners, particularly the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, in reaching this significant target.

It is important to note that, while this achievement is extraordinary, it is fragile. The WHO European Region is subject to the continual importation of cases from other regions with endemic malaria and any weakening of political commitment may lead to the resurgence of malaria in countries that have become malaria-free.

Preventing the re-establishment of malaria transmission in countries of the WHO European Region is an essential step towards the implementation of Health 2020, the Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016–2030 and the goals and targets of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We, the Member States signatories of the Tashkent Declaration, reaffirm our commitment to efficiently managing malaria importation, to preventing the re-establishment of local transmission and to rapidly containing any resurgence of malaria, and:

1. Recognize the need to sustain political commitment, an adequate level of financing and investment in health systems strengthening to maintain the malaria-free status of countries in the Region;
2. Commit to developing and implementing technically sound national strategies on the prevention of the re-establishment of malaria transmission, including through a high degree of vigilance and capacity-building;
3. Reaffirm that we will continue to provide full information to WHO on an annual basis confirming the malaria-free status of countries in the Region;
4. Emphasize the need to further strengthen cross-border collaboration between countries on the prevention of malaria re-establishment. We ask the WHO Regional Office for Europe to continue to facilitate intercountry and interregional coordination on this aspect;
5. Encourage all Member States in the WHO European Region to certify malaria elimination, acknowledging that it remains the prerogative of national governments to decide whether to request this certification;
6. Call upon the WHO Regional Office for Europe to continue to assist countries in the Region in strengthening national efforts and in advocating to maintain a malaria-free Europe;
7. Request that the WHO Regional Office for Europe coordinate partner support to country efforts to prevent the re-establishment of malaria transmission;
8. Agree that it is essential to apply lessons learned from the journey towards a malaria-free Europe in addressing the re-emergence of other mosquito-borne diseases.