Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Phage therapy, a public health issue

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Ms Maryvonne BLONDIN and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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The spread of bacterial infections that do not respond to antibiotics, called « multi-resistant », especially in health facilities, is considered today as a serious threat for public health. This situation, combined with insufficient research on new antibiotics, leads to the resurgence of interest for alternative or complementary methods regarding bacterial diseases, including phage therapy.

Phage therapy treats some infectious diseases caused by bacteria using bacteriophage viruses, or phages, i.e. viruses that only infect bacteria. It is a secure and effective method with quick impact, as soon as the bacteria causing the disease is identified and phages are administered to the patient. This method was formally used before antibiotics were discovered and is still used in some countries of eastern Europe. Furthermore, it has many advantages such as absence of serious adverse effects, low probability of harming natural and useful bacteria, and the possibility of treating multi-resistant infections.

The Parliamentary Assembly notes that the development of phage therapy is constrained by numerous obstacles of regulatory but also financial nature. Marketing authorisations require indeed research and clinical studies programmes to be conducted with substantial funding.

In the light of these public health issues, the Assembly calls on member States of the Council of Europe to prioritise development of phage therapy as a complement of antibiotic therapy.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left