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Parliamentary question to the Chairperson-in-Office of the Committee of Ministers

Parliamentary questions

1. Question from Ms Laima Liucija ANDRIKIENĖ, Lithuania, EPP/CD

In 2015 the German Chancellor Angela Merkel inspired the G7 meeting in Germany to address the rapidly growing danger of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). On 30 March 2021, global leaders supported an International Treaty on Pandemics and they agreed that AMR may cause the next pandemic. Parliamentary Assembly members, signatories of the written declaration on AMR published on 1 April 2021 (Doc. 15255), call on the Committee of Ministers to propose that all governments of member States immediately develop effective and enforceable legislation to stop overuse of antibiotics in agriculture and human health care. An emergency taskforce to prepare for an AMR outbreak should be established.

Ms Andrikienė, to ask the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers:

Is the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers in a position to take actions to prevent the next pandemic? Can the Committee of Ministers develop a united approach to legislative actions in each member State?

Reply by the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers

Thank you for drawing attention to this important topic of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), which is high on the agenda of policy makers and health organisations around the world. Whilst it is not an issue that has been discussed, nor falls within the competences of the Committee of Ministers, Germany and, I am sure, the large majority of the member States of the Organisation are committed to addressing the challenges of AMR, and fully support the work being done in other Organisations in addressing these. In this respect, I would recall that the World Health Organisation (WHO) published a Global Action Plan on AMR and the World Health Assembly adopted a resolution on AMR in May 2019.

Fighting AMR is also high on the agenda of the European Commission, it is part of their Pharma Strategy adopted in November 2020 and was already part of the Mission Letter of Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health. The European Union has also established their AMR One-Health Network[1].

AMR is also a priority of the recently adopted European Medicines Agencies Network Strategy to 2025, jointly adopted by the Management Board of the European Medicines Agency and the Heads of Medicines Agencies.[2]

I encourage all member States and the relevant bodies of the Council of Europe to continue to follow closely and support, as appropriate, the work taking place in this field in the relevant international and European organisations.

1. More information on https://ec.europa.eu/health/antimicrobial-resistance/eu-action-on-antimicrobial-resistance_en.
2. https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/documents/report/european-union-medicines-agencies-network-strategy-2025-protecting-public-health-time-rapid-change_en.pdf).

With regard to the specific contribution of the Council of Europe, I would take the opportunity to draw attention to the “Council of Europe contribution to support member States in addressing healthcare issues in the context of the present public health crisis and beyond” prepared by the Secretary General, and which focuses primarily on the crisis-related issues relating to healthcare in the light of relevant conventions of the Council of Europe. It is also underlined that the Council of Europe must enhance its co-operation activities regarding national practices to address pandemics. To this end, a new multilateral and multidimensional co-operation project is currently being prepared, which will identify the most acute issues and the effective solutions to be adopted or to be considered at national level.