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## Commission on Human Rights

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### General comment on the draft Resolution on “Access to medication in the context of pandemics such as HIV/AIDS” (L.50)

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the European Union member states of the Commission on Human Rights, as well as the central and eastern European countries associated with the European Union, members of the Commission on Human Rights, Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland and Romania, I have the honour to take the floor on the draft resolution entitled “Access to medication in the context of pandemics such as HIV/AIDS” (L.50).

This general comment has been agreed to by the European Union as a whole, by the central and eastern European countries associated with the European Union Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, as well as by the associated country Cyprus.

Firstly, the European Union reiterates its recognition of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and that necessary steps to be taken by states in order to achieve the full realisation of this right include prevention, treatment and control of epidemics as well as the creation of conditions which would ensure medical service and medical attention.

There is no doubt of the positive effects of an increased access to medication in order to cure people who are ill or, in those cases where there is no cure, to provide relief and increase the possibilities of a longer life in dignity. However, medication still constitutes only a limited part of the actions needed to improve lives for people living with pandemics, such as HIV/AIDS. The importance of prevention and health care infrastructures as well as sustainable leadership cannot be emphasised enough. Success can be attained only through a multi-sectorial approach.

For these reasons the European Union proposed at an early stage a merged resolution on HIV/AIDS, i.e. a merger of the present resolution contained in document L.50 and the resolution on “The Protection of Human Rights in the Context of HIV/AIDS” contained in document L.69. This merger was proposed to put the issue of medication into the wider context. Unfortunately this was not possible.

The European Union would also like to underline that no provisions in this resolution can be interpreted as undermining or limiting existing international agreements, including in the field of intellectual property.

The EU is making a major contribution to global efforts to address the communicable disease burden and to improve the health of people living in developing countries. There is a need to step up and accelerate existing health and development operations by establishing innovative strategies involving partnership between public authorities, civil society and the private sector for the rapid improvement of access to pharmaceutical services and products and of their coverage and quality.

Finally the European Union would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation for the frank, open and very constructive consultations that have taken place regarding the present resolution. The co-operative spirit from the Brazilian delegation has to be especially acknowledged.

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