

# Minutes

## Regional meeting on access to ARV- treatment in Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (EECA)

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March 5-6 Kyiv, Ukraine



Украина 04080, Киев, ул. Межигорская, 87 а  
Тел.: +380 (44) 467-75-65, +380 (44) 467-75-82,  
факс: +380 (44) 467-75-93

87а, Mezhygirska str. Kyiv, 04080, Ukraine  
Tel. +380 (44) 467-75-65, +380 (44) 467-75-82,  
fax: +380 (44) 467-75-93  
web: [www.ecuo.org](http://www.ecuo.org)  
Mailto: [secretariat@ecuo.org](mailto:secretariat@ecuo.org)

## Participants

26 representatives of international organisations, government officials and civil society representatives attended the Regional meeting. List of Participants – see Annex 1.

## Agenda

### A. Session 1: welcome speech and introduction of participants

### B. Session 2: situation with HIV treatment in EECA region

#### PRESENTATIONS:

- a) Jean-Elie Malkin, UNAIDS Regional Support Team for Europe and Central Asia, «Everyone gets treatment»
- b) Irina Eramova, WHO, «ART: situation overview in EECA countries»
- c) Nicolas Cantau, GF, «Support of the GF in ensuring ART in EECA – possibilities and challenges»
- d) Jean-Elie Malkin, UNAIDS, «Analysis of the main obstacles towards scaling up access to ART in the region and UNAIDS strategies for its solutions»

#### DISCUSSIONS:

The following issues were discussed:

- Role of UNAIDS in securing access to ART in the region; on the consent of UNAIDS regional office to act as fiduciary agency for implementation of the regional grant in the field of prevention and supervision of HIV/AIDS at the territory of Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries in 2013-2015.
- Difficulties with identifying the number of HIV+ people, who need ART, difference in WHO and UNAIDS data, new criteria for ARV treatment initiation.
- Sustainability of ARV treatment programmes after the GF withdrawal and role of the GF in this process (registration of ARV medicines, plan for transition of patients, who take ART from the GF programmes into the state funding programmes, etc).

#### DECISIONS/SUGGESTIONS:

In the process of the discussion, the following suggestions were voiced:

- Involvement of PLWH community representatives into development of documents affecting scaling up access to ARV treatment in EECA countries; setting up exchange of strategic information about key actions and events re access to ART in EECA region; WHO and UNAIDS: to be more clear and precise about their messages (for example, data on the total number of PLWH, on the number of PLWH, who need ARV treatment, etc);
- GF: to pay attention to sustainability of HIV treatment programmes within framework of implementation of existing GF rounds (for example, to offer countries to implement a gradual plan of patients transition from the GF programme to state programme that would also allow to increase PLWH coverage, who take ART;

- CO: it's important to keep the issue of ARV treatment programmes' sustainability after the GF withdrawal high on the agenda using CCM possibilities;
- As patient community, ECUO does not have relevant tools and techniques to identify the exact number of people, who need ART. Therefore, ECUO will rely on WHO and UNAIDS data and asks these organisations to assist with official data on the needs of countries in treatment.

### **C. Session 3: Situation with treatment in ECUO region (continued)**

#### PRESENTATIONS:

- a) Renate Utshmidt, European Union, «EU actions for HIV prevention, treatment and care in Eastern partnership countries»
- b) Ruslan Malyuta, UNICEF, «Success of PMTCT programmes – important elements of universal access to treatment in CIS»
- c) Gregory Vergus, ITPCru, «Role of ITPCru in EECA region»
- d) Boyan Konstantinov, UNDP, «Political issues: scaling up access to quality treatment using registration and TRIPS flexibilities»

#### DISCUSSION:

The following issues were discussed:

Using TRIPS flexibilities as a mechanism of influence to decrease ARV medicines prices and scale up access to treatment in EECA region.

#### DESICIONS/SUGGESTIONS:

- It's important that legislative framework in the country allowed usage of TRIPS flexibilities that could assist in meaningful negotiation process with pharmaceutical companies to decrease prices for medicines as it happens, for instance, in Ukraine.
- It's important to develop mechanisms for pharmaceutical companies' motivation to register ARV medicines in the countries with small markets (for instance, experience of Armenia, where additions to current legislation has been made that allow pharmaceutical companies to register ARV medicines that went through prequalification by WHO done under the simplified procedure and reduced price).
- ARV medicines that are recommended by guiding principles of WHO should be registered, including those that went through WHO prequalification (for generics).

## **D. Session 4: ECUO approach – regional strategy**

### **PRESENTATIONS:**

- a) Natalya Leonchuk, ECUO, presentation of the Regional advocacy strategy.

### **DISCUSSION:**

- Comments re ECUO strategy: it's important to get across messages of the regional strategy to decision makers at the highest level.
- Review a possibility to change wording of interim result by 2015 – 100% securing of ART for all who need it, by 2020 – 100% at state budget cost.
- Review an indicator that defines effectiveness of ARV treatment – the number and % of HIV-infected adults and children, who continue to receive antiretroviral treatment 12 months after its initiation.
- Take into account an indicator on testing and sequence “testing-treatment-forming adherence”.

Cooperation of CS with countries' government to attract external financial resources to state funding to scale up coverage of PLWH, who take ART.

### **DESICION/SUGGESTIONS:**

- As a framework document, the strategy reflects the main priorities of the regional international organisations on access to treatment.
- ECUO accepts all existing challenges related to ART access (testing, counseling, adherence to ART, etc) and does not suggest refusal from external funding.
- But along with that, it's important to have a secure provision of ARV treatment by state for HIV-positive people, which guarantees sustainability of treatment programmes. Donors cannot guarantee lifelong treatment provision, this is responsibility of state. Therefore, ECUO as a regional organisation is focused on achievement of this goal and ECUO member-states are tackling with issues of testing and shaping adherence to ART at country level. Experience of Russia and Ukraine shows that a lot of problems arise with securing procurement and supply process when state takes this responsibility. Therefore, it's especially important to secure gradual transition of patients taking ART to the state programme to ensure sustainable and uninterrupted ARV treatment.
- ECUO will take into account comments it received during implementation of the strategy.

## **E. Session 5: Implementation of the strategy and its promotion together with its partners and stakeholders**

### PRESENTATIONS:

- a) George Mataradze, Establishment of the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) for technical consultations of the regional PLWH community to improve effectiveness of the regional advocacy strategy implementation.

### DISCUSSION:

The following issues were discussed:

- RAG role not only from the technical/expert assistance point of view but also as a political support to society at regional and national platforms.
- Terms of reference for RAG with few indicators and more specific goals for the work.
- Inclusion of state authorities to RAG on a regular basis or through invitation depending on the nature of necessary consultation/ expertise.

### DECISIONS/SUGGESTIONS

- To establish RAG on scaling up sustainable access to ARV treatment in EECA countries that would join efforts of key regional players in the field of access to ART, provide technical and expert assistance in implementation of ECUO Strategy and raise questions of access to ART at the highest political level.
- Revise terms of reference for RAG to reflect its political weight, along with technical/consultancy functions.
- UNAIDS is ready to support implementation of the ECUO Regional Strategy; to provide technical assistance for achievement of universal access in the region.
- Number of international organisations, such as: International HIV/AIDS Alliance, EHRN, UNDP, UNAIDS, UNICEF, ITPCru voiced their willingness to take part in the work of RAG.

## **F. Session 6: Review of the situation in EECA region**

### PRESENTATIONS:

- a) Tatyana Alexandrina, State Service of Ukraine to countering HIV/AIDS and other Socially Dangerous Diseases, «Prospects of the state in securing access to treatment. Main problems and their solutions».
- b) Marina Tiroyan, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia, presentation of the situation with treatment in Armenia.
- c) Sayrankul Kasymbekova, the Republican AIDS Centre, Kazakhstan, «Prospects of governments in access to treatment – main difficulties and possibilities of the Ministries of Health in countries through the example of the Republic of Kazakhstan»

### DISCUSSION:

The following issues were discussed:

- Main task of RAG – securing sustainability of treatment programmes in the long run. By 2018 Ukraine can become a leader in this region. If we can foresee

strengthening of the wider coverage in the long run, it would benefit our advocacy initiative; getting help of the GF in support of advocacy activities of communities in the countries.

- Inclusion of the World Bank into the RAG as a player that influences the situation with HIV/AIDS in the region;
- Creating the list of main regional and international events to voice key advocacy messages of the community in the region and to raise an issue of ARV access in EECA countries.
- Possibilities of RAG composition identification depending on the issue, subject matter or event.

#### DECISIONS/SUGGESTIONS

- UNAIDS voiced its readiness to support the community of countries in negotiations with pharmaceutical companies and governments on scaling up access to treatment.
- Request should be sent to all participants of this meeting to identify key events for 2013 that could be used as a platform for regional PLWH community to deliver key messages of access to treatment in the region.

#### **Next steps:**

Activity	Responsible	Deadlines
Review terms of reference for RAG operation and approve list of participants	ECUO Secretariat	April 2013
Organise the next meeting of RAG	ECUO Secretariat	November 2013
Organize RAG work via message list	ECUO Secretariat	April-November 2013
Identify the list of main regional events as platforms that could be used to deliver messages of CS for 2013	ECUO Secretariat, RAG members	May 2013

## Annex 1

### List of Participants

#	Organisation/Country	Name	E-mail	Position
1.	ITPCru	Gregory Vergus	<a href="mailto:gregory.vergus@itpcru.org">gregory.vergus@itpcru.org</a>	Regional Coordinator for EECA
2.	EHRN	Sergey Votyagov	<a href="mailto:sergey@harm-reduction.org">sergey@harm-reduction.org</a>	Executive Director
3.	International HIV/Alliance in Ukraine	Gennady Roshchupkin	<a href="mailto:roshchupkin@aidsalliance.org.ua">roshchupkin@aidsalliance.org.ua</a>	Technical coordinator
4.	Global Fund	Nicolas Cantau	<a href="mailto:nicolas.cantau@theglobalfund.org">nicolas.cantau@theglobalfund.org</a>	Regional Manager, EE&CA
5.	UNDP Europe and the CIS	Dr. Christoph Hamelmann	<a href="mailto:christoph.hamelmann@undp.org">christoph.hamelmann@undp.org</a>	Regional Practice Leader HIV, Health and Development, UNDP Europe and the CIS, Bratislava Regional Centre
6.	UNDP Europe and the CIS	Boyan Konstantinov	<a href="mailto:boyan.konstantinov@undp.org">boyan.konstantinov@undp.org</a>	Programme Specialist
7.	UNICEF	Ruslan Malyuta	<a href="mailto:rmalyuta@unicef.org">rmalyuta@unicef.org</a>	Program Officer HIV/AIDS UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS
8.	WHO Regional Office for Europe	Dr Irina Eramova	<a href="mailto:ier@euro.who.int">ier@euro.who.int</a>	Senior Medical Officer, HIV/AIDS, STIs & Viral Hepatitis Communicable Diseases, Health Security & Environment
9.	European Union	Renate Utzschmid	<a href="mailto:renate.utzschmid@ec.europa.eu">renate.utzschmid@ec.europa.eu</a>	Programme manager
10.	All-Russian Union of PLWH	Vladimir Mayanovskiy	<a href="mailto:v.mayan@pluscentre.ru">v.mayan@pluscentre.ru</a>	Chairman
11.	Ukraine	Tatyana Alexandrina	<a href="mailto:aleksandrina@dssz.gov.ua">aleksandrina@dssz.gov.ua</a>	Head of State Service of Ukraine to countering HIV/AIDS and other Socially Dangerous Diseases
12.	Armenia	Marina Tiroian	<a href="mailto:m.tiroyan@moh.am">m.tiroyan@moh.am</a>	HIV/AIDS program coordinator, MoH/Armenia
13.	Kazakhstan	Sairankul Kasimbekova	<a href="mailto:lpo.zav@rc aids.kz">lpo.zav@rc aids.kz</a>	Head of clinical monitoring department, Kazakhstan Republican AIDS center
14.	Kazakhstan	Nurali Amandjolov	<a href="mailto:nurali70@mail.ru">nurali70@mail.ru</a>	CA association of PLWH /

				Kazakhstan Union of PLWH
15.	Ukraine	Viktoria Tymoshevska	<a href="mailto:tymoshevska@irf.kiev.ua">tymoshevska@irf.kiev.ua</a>	International Foundation “Vidrodzhennya” Public health programme director
16.	UNAIDS	Jean-Elie Malkin	<a href="mailto:malkinj@unaids.org">malkinj@unaids.org</a>	Director, Regional Support Team for EE&CA
17.	UNAIDS	Manoela Manova	<a href="mailto:manovam@unaids.org">manovam@unaids.org</a>	Regional Investment and Efficiency Advisor
18.	UNAIDS	Jacek Tyszkowski	<a href="mailto:tyszkowski@unaids.org">tyszkowski@unaids.org</a>	Country Coordinator Ukraine
19.	UNAIDS / HQ	Richard Burzynski	<a href="mailto:burzynski@unaids.org">burzynski@unaids.org</a>	UNAIDS senior advisor
20.	UNAIDS / HQ	Elina Viitaniemi	<a href="mailto:viitaniemi@unaids.org">viitaniemi@unaids.org</a>	Program Officer
21.	UNAIDS / Ukraine	Olena Sherstiuk	<a href="mailto:sherstyuko@unaids.org">sherstyuko@unaids.org</a>	Advocacy & Leadership Advisor / Ukraine
22.	ECUO	Vladimir Zhovtyak	<a href="mailto:vladimir@network.org.ua">vladimir@network.org.ua</a>	Predident
23.	ECUO	Natalya Leonchuk	<a href="mailto:nataliya@ecuo.org">nataliya@ecuo.org</a>	Senior Advocacy Advisor
24.	ECUO	George Mataradze	<a href="mailto:g.mataradze@ecuo.org">g.mataradze@ecuo.org</a>	Executive Director
25.	ECUO	Tatyana Khan	<a href="mailto:tatyana@ecuo.org">tatyana@ecuo.org</a>	Advocacy officer
26.	ECUO	Yulia Raskevich	<a href="mailto:raskevich@ecuo.org">raskevich@ecuo.org</a>	Communication officer
<b>Invited but couldn't attend</b>				
1.	GNP+	Ed Ngoksin	Specialist on vulneRAGle groups	
2.	UNITAID	Denis Broun	Executive director	
3.	AIDS Healthcare Foundation	Zoya Shabarova	Eastern Europe & Central Asia Bureau Chief	
4.	Russian Federation	Dr. Alexander Goliusov	Deputy director, Department of Healthcare and Sanitary-Epidemiological Wellbeing, Ministry of Health, Moscow	
5.	Executive committee of CIS countries	Sergey Lebedev	Co-chair	