

# THE HUMAN RIGHT TO HEALTH A WHA RESOLUTION?

Natalya Olin

Nord-Sud XXI

Medicus Mundi Symposium  
Basel, November 2011

# SUMMARY

- ◉ Where has the Right to Health (RtH) has been agreed upon by States?
- ◉ How the RtH has been considered within WHO and its partners?
- ◉ What is the value-added of a WHA Resolution on the Right to Health?
- ◉ What can civil society do to help achieve a resolution?



# THE RIGHT TO HEALTH



## *Legal expressions:*

- ◉ The League of Nations Health Organization, 1922
- ◉ The World Health Organization, 1945
- ◉ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
- ◉ International Covenant of Economic and Social Rights, 1976
- ◉ Numerous regional treaties

## *Political expressions:*

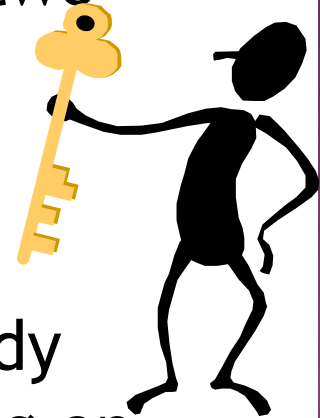
- ◉ PAHO Res. “Health and Human Rights” (Sept. 2010)
- ◉ WHA Res. “Sustainable Health Financing Structures and Universal Coverage” (May 2011)
- ◉ UNGA Political Declaration on Non-Communicable Diseases (Sept. 2011)
- ◉ Rio Declaration on Social Determinants of Health (Oct. 2011)

# THE VALUE ADDED OF A WHA RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

1. The Value-Added for WHO
  - ⦿ Organization
  - ⦿ Activities
2. The Value-Added for States
3. The Value-Added for CS
4. What CSOs/NGOs can do

# THE VALUE ADDED FOR WHO ORGANIZATION

1. Guide priority setting by WHO Sec, EB, WHA
2. Guide the more frequent drafting of two year strategies mandated by EB
3. Guide the WHO's adopted strategy of mainstreaming human rights
4. Better utilize and empower the already existing resources within WHO working on the human right to health
5. Better align WHO with States' expectations and States' existing commitments



# THE VALUE ADDED FOR WHO ACTIVITIES

- ◉ Encourage WHO to engage States' cooperation
- ◉ Empower WHO to better engage with international and regional human rights mechanisms
- ◉ Reiterate the commitment to the RtH by the States that are WHO
- ◉ Focus WHO's strategy for health on the concept of human dignity
- ◉ Enhance WHO's contribution to international norms and standard setting



# THE VALUE ADDED FOR STATES

- ◉ Reiterate their existing commitment to the rights-based approach
- ◉ Strengthen the relationship between health & social determinates & MDGs
- ◉ Encourage States to enter into & seek cooperation for achieving health for all
- ◉ Emphasize participation of individuals and civil society in health-related decision-making
- ◉ Contribute to enhancing the education of people about their right to health
- ◉ Encourage accountability for the right to health by all States both within their countries and across borders



Image based on photo from WHO.int

# ADDED-VALUE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

- Another tool to encourage States' to respect the human right to health
  - Especially to encourage cooperation
  - A tool to encourage increased investment in health by States
  - To ensure accountability by all actors
- A means to achieve greater participation opportunities and rights within and with WHO
- A reminder of the universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated nature of human rights





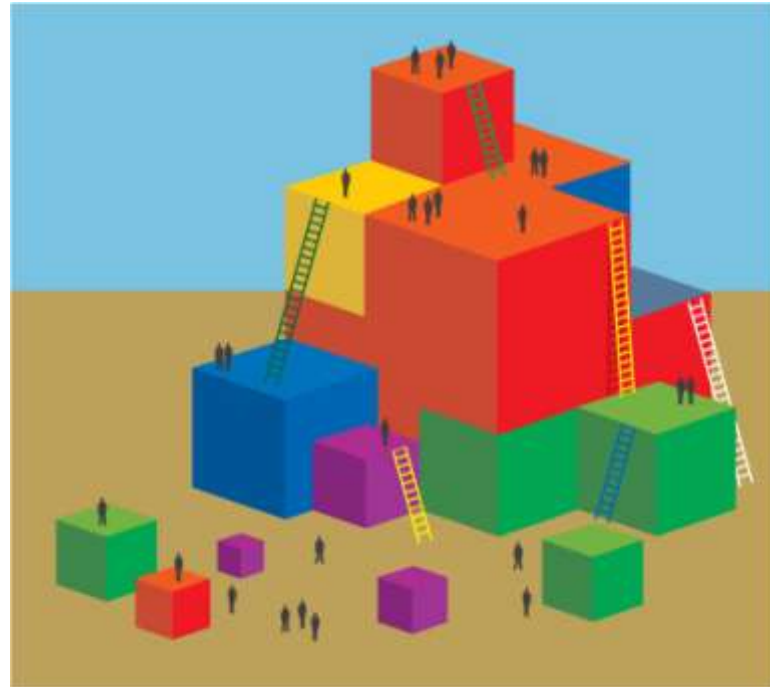
# WHAT IS REQUIRED FROM STATES AND CIVIL SOCIETY?

- ◉ Engage States to consider the human right to health as they set WHO's priorities
- ◉ Encourage States to reiterate their commitment to the right to health at this crucial time in WHO's future planning
- ◉ Encourage WHO staff working on human rights and health to take this opportunity to strengthen their mandate
- ◉ Undertake efforts to discuss the rights-based approach to health



# CONTACT

Ms. Natalya Olin  
Nord-Sud XXI  
WHA.HRH@gmail.com



Thank you!