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TURKMENISTAN ON THE WORLD HEALTH ARENA: COOPERATION WITH WHO**A.A. Ovezova, Lecturer****Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan
(Turkmenistan, Ashgabat)***DOI:10.24412/2500-1000-2024-6-3-148-151*

Abstract. *The article examines the multifaceted cooperation between Turkmenistan and the World Health Organization (WHO), highlighting their shared commitment to creating a healthier world. The partnership has resulted in significant public health achievements, including the eradication of several infectious diseases, strengthening health infrastructure and promoting healthy lifestyles. Turkmenistan's commitment to global health is demonstrated by its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.*

Keywords: *medical diplomacy, contribution, Turkmenistan, the World Health Organization, Sustainable Development Goals, medical services, initiatives, strategy.*

Humanity is one with the world, nature, and requires an integrated approach to protect human health from global warming, environmental pollution, animal diseases and others. Of course, ensuring a clean environment and protecting it is not the work of one year or one country. It requires long-term, joint and multilateral cooperation.

Turkmenistan, a nation nestled in Central Asia, has emerged as a staunch advocate for global health initiatives, forging a strong partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) to enhance the well-being of its citizens and contribute to international public health endeavors. This article delves into the multifaceted collaboration between Turkmenistan and the WHO, highlighting their shared commitment to fostering a healthier world.

Dedication of Turkmenistan to global health is evident in its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 3 [1], which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. In collaboration with the WHO, Turkmenistan has made significant strides in achieving this goal, implementing effective strategies to combat infectious diseases, promote maternal and child health, and strengthen its healthcare infrastructure.

The collaboration between Turkmenistan and the World Health Organization (WHO) is a cornerstone of the nation's health strategy. Since Turkmenistan gained independence, this partnership has evolved, yielding signifi-

cant public health achievements and establishing a foundation for future advancements. The WHO is an international organization that promotes healthy lifestyles, taking into account the interests of all countries in the health care system. In this regard, the states are cooperating with this organization in order to improve their healthcare systems. Being founded on April 7, 1948 in Geneva (Switzerland), the organization is a specialized UN agency. It has 194 member states, and according to the WHO Charter, the goal of this organization is to achieve the highest possible level of health by all people.

As is known, Turkmenistan has been a member of the WHO since July 2, 1992 [2]. The organization closely supports the Government on public health programs aimed at meeting the needs in order to support the sustainable development of its health care system and policy. Turkmenistan has been working with the World Health Organization for 32 years in 7 priority pillars, such as communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, promotion of healthy lifestyles, health systems, emergency preparedness, surveillance and response to Public Health Emergencies, capacity building at the primary care level, influence of environmental factors and mitigation of the effects of climate change on health [3, p. 65]. It made significant progress in strengthening the health of citizens, extending life expectancy, completely eliminating several dangerous infectious diseases, and

adopting the world's new leading practices and trends in medical science.

Recognizing the growing burden of NCDs, Turkmenistan has implemented national strategies to combat cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer with support of the WHO. Public health campaigns promoting healthy lifestyles, anti-smoking regulations, and improved dietary practices have been integral to these efforts. Moreover, the WHO has assisted Turkmenistan in enhancing its health system capabilities, including training healthcare professionals, improving healthcare infrastructure, and adopting evidence-based medical practices. These efforts have ensured the resilience and responsiveness of the health system, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The partnership has strengthened Turkmenistan's disease surveillance and emergency response mechanisms. The technical assistance in establishing robust disease monitoring systems has enabled early detection and effective responses to outbreaks, maintaining public health security.

Continuing the focus on maternal and child health, Turkmenistan has implemented programs to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates. The WHO has supported initiatives to improve prenatal care, enhance nutrition, and ensure safe childbirth practices, leading to significant improvements in health outcomes for mothers and children. Turkmenistan also has made significant progress in addressing environmental health issues with the guidance of the WHO. Efforts include improving air and water quality, managing waste, and promoting sustainable practices to reduce environmental health risks.

At present, taking into account the national legislation in accordance with the recommendations of the WHO several important programs have been developed and are being successfully implemented in the country. International certificates of eradication of several dangerous infectious diseases, including drakunculosis, poliomyelitis, malaria, measles and rubella, as well as certificate of contribution to the prevention of non-communicable diseases clearly demonstrate the success of these programs. Turkmenistan was officially recognized as the first among the Commonwealth of Independent States and

Central Asian countries, and the fourth in the world, to iodize table salt in accordance with international standards. Also, the flour produced in the country is enriched with iron and folic acid. As a result, Turkmenistan was awarded an international award as a leading country in its enrichment, which stimulated new developments. Currently, the possibilities of enriching it with zinc and B12 vitamins have been studied. Moreover, the population of Turkmenistan occupies a leading position in the region in terms of the level of providing vaccines and immunization, and is in the first rank of the countries that carry out measures on immuno-prophylaxis [4].

Therefore, in order to prevent diseases and protect people's health, the quality and safety of food products are strictly controlled in Turkmenistan, large-scale work is being carried out to provide the population with clean drinking water in all regions of the country. The WHO supports the efforts of Turkmenistan in solving the tasks of healthy nutrition of the population in the field of prevention of diseases. The National Program on Healthy Nutrition of the Population of Turkmenistan for 2020-2025, approved on February 27, 2020, is aimed at strengthening health and preventing non-communicable diseases.

On the initiative of Turkmenistan, in 2018, on the basis of a special resolution of the UN General Assembly, June 3 of every year was declared as World Bicycle Day. This is a clear proof that Turkmenistan is among the leading countries that are known as a place of health.

Turkmenistan regularly exchanges experience with the countries of the world, participates in international events related to healthcare. Today, the work of protecting people's health consists of a wide-scale system that includes several determinants. These conditions include health centers and sanatoriums equipped with modern, high-tech equipment from the world's leading manufacturers, development of mass sports, active recreation facilities, and strengthening of healthy lifestyles in society.

The new initiatives of the Turkmen side open great opportunities for collective research in various fields. Mutual cooperation in the study of the origin of the coronavirus,

activation of the work of the scientific medical community in the study of new types of infectious diseases, and joint work in the search for effective methods and means of treating particularly dangerous infectious diseases are among those areas.

Regular meetings with scientists, experts and other specialists of the world's largest health care and research centers through the digital network with Turkmen side prove the effectiveness of medical diplomacy. This directly contributes to the development of international cooperation and exchange of experience in this important sector.

The global pandemic has highlighted the importance of health diplomacy, requiring the combined efforts of the global community in combating with this global threat. The significant efforts undertaken in Turkmenistan within the framework of State Program "Saglyk" (Health), including measures taken to prevent infectious diseases, to strengthen material and technical base of the healthcare sector, to develop medical education and to expand the scope of international relations on this field. Turkmenistan was one of the first countries to take comprehensive measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection into its territory. On May 22, 2020, the Plan for Preparedness of Turkmenistan to Counteract an Acute Infectious Disease and Take Rapid Response Measures was prepared and approved by the Decree of the President of Turkmenistan. All activities planned for it were actively organized with the support of the WHO Country Office and various the UN agencies [5, p. 109].

Each year Turkmenistan actively participates on a mass cycling. At the initiative of Turkmenistan, on March 15, 2022 the General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously adopted the Resolution "Integrating mass cycling into public transport systems to achieve sustainable development" at the 61st plenary session of its 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The resolution, co-sponsored by 62 states, was adopted unanimously. The adoption by the UN General Assembly of this resolution initiated by Turkmenistan was another confirmation of the careful attitude of the state to the issues of strengthening the health of the people, the

formation of physically strong and spiritually rich youth through the development of physical culture and sports at the world level, approval in society principles of a healthy lifestyle.

As is known, in 2018, at the initiative of Turkmenistan, the UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution on the establishment of June 3 as World Bicycle Day. So, cycling is very beneficial for improving your health and getting fit. This is evidence of the full recognition of the political course pursued by Turkmenistan to strengthen peace, friendship and fruitful interaction on the planet.

Turkmenistan systematically strengthens cooperation in the field of healthcare with the countries of the world and major international organizations, attaching great importance to the expansion of scientific and medical cooperation in such important areas as the exchange of experience through telemedicine and teleconferences, as well as the introduction of advanced methods in practical medicine. Positive experience in modernizing the healthcare system is receiving international recognition, one of the evidences of which is the awarding of the country with a special medal by the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe for achievements in providing the population with high-quality medical and preventive services.

Thus, the partnership between Turkmenistan and the WHO has evolved significantly, leading to substantial improvements in the public health landscape. It has effectively addressed a wide range of health challenges, from infectious diseases to non-communicable diseases, and from maternal and child health to environmental health. Looking ahead, continued cooperation will focus on leveraging digital health, addressing climate change, achieving universal health coverage, enhancing pandemic preparedness, and promoting health equity. This sustained partnership will ensure that Turkmenistan continues to make progress in its public health endeavors, benefiting its population for years to come.

By maintaining and expanding this partnership, Turkmenistan and the WHO can work together to build a healthier, more resilient future, equipped to handle the evolving

health challenges of the 21st century. The achievements thus far provide a strong foundation, and the future holds immense potential for further advancements and successes.

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ТУРКМЕНИСТАН НА МИРОВОЙ АРЕНЕ ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ: СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО С ВОЗ

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***Аннотация.** В статье анализируется многогранное сотрудничество между Туркменистаном и Всемирной организацией здравоохранения (ВОЗ), подчеркивается их общая приверженность созданию более здорового мира. Партнерство привело к значительным достижениям в области общественного здравоохранения, включая искоренение нескольких инфекционных заболеваний, укрепление инфраструктуры здравоохранения и пропаганду здорового образа жизни. Приверженность Туркменистана глобальному здравоохранению проявляется в его соответствии Целям устойчивого развития (ЦУР), особенно ЦУР 3, направленной на обеспечение здоровой жизни и содействие благополучию для всех в любом возрасте.*

***Ключевые слова:** медицинская дипломатия, вклад, Туркменистан, Всемирная организация здравоохранения, Цели устойчивого развития, медицинские услуги, инициативы, стратегия.*