

SPEECH DR DIRK CUYPERS – PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD – FPS PUBLIC HEALTH

KICK-OFF MEETING - JOINT ACTION EU HWF

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Over the course of the day, you have been reminded of the challenges that our generation and future generations will have to deal with regarding healthcare workers. We all know that these challenges cannot be tackled by diverging policies.

Planning is one part of the effort that is needed to manage these human resources issues. We need to know, make prognoses, and discuss the issues at local, EU, and World level. Since the Green paper and the BE-Presidency Conference in 2010, many countries have expressed their interest in going further than local prognosis and local policymaking. Europe offers us a chance to align policies without disregarding those local needs. By co-financing this Joint Action, the Executive Agency for Health & Consumers helps the Union and our different Governments to progress through the delivery of tangible added value for the policy makers.

I would like to thank the Executive Agency for providing us with their support during the preparation of this Joint Action.

Today was a good example of what the world should be: a gathering of like-minded people with goodwill working together, major international bodies promoting a complex piece of work that will influence our future. With the level of commitment I have witnessed today, I have faith in the outcome of this Joint Action.

I especially want to thank the WHO representative and the EU-Commission representative for their participation now and in the future. They have expressed their expectations and the Joint Action will meet those.

I acknowledge the effort that our teams have made leading up to the start of this Joint Action today. But we must be careful, even though about 2 years have been invested in the set up of this project, this is but the start, and the path to its conclusion is still long.

To the Belgian Team, I would like to convey my warmest felicitations. I wish to stress the leading role of Henk Van den Broele, who generated the goodwill around him to build up this programme and the first Joint Action proposal in March 2012.

It is now up to Michel Van Hoegaerden & Lieve Jorens, together with their team, to help the Joint Action succeed, and I'm confident that they will accomplish this according to the project plan.

My instructions to Michel & Lieve are to apply rigorous project management to this Joint Action as stated by our Federal Public Service, and ensure that the Union benefits from the Joint Action as soon as possible.

I know from the individual kick-off sessions of the various work packages that the agenda has been set for the first workshops. I also take careful note of the first conference in January next year.

I wish to thank the work package teams for the work accomplished up to the present. And I also wish to encourage all the Work Package leaders, the Associated and the Collaborative Partners to invest enough time and

effort in this Joint Action, regardless of the constraints, and this for the next 36 months. The Action needs a Quick Start, because the issues are already present in our healthcare systems. But I have complete confidence that this will be the case. So please accept my appreciation in advance.

Today, I stand before you as the President of the Board of the Belgian Federal Public Service of Health, Food Chain Safety & Environment and the Chief Medical Officer of Belgium. By launching this Joint Action, I see us solving a piece of the puzzle that is achieving sustainability for our healthcare systems.

But I am also the father of a medical doctor, wanting my daughter to have an enjoyable professional life, providing all patients with a high quality of service.

And finally I am a patient, who wants the accessibility of healthcare to be maintained, without reduction of quality.

The work we do here is for future generations, it is for healthcare workers and patients and I am honoured officially launch this project.

Therefore, I now declare the Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning & Forecasting started.

Thank you for your attention.

D.C.