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## Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

### Putting human rights back at the heart of medical supply chains

#### ***Declaration unanimously adopted by the Committee on 12 October 2023***

1. The Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development is extremely concerned about the real, deep-seated, and serious failings in medical supply chains in Europe and the world. It calls once again for a rapid response to a situation which it already denounced in [Resolution 2474 \(2022\)](#) and [Recommendation 2243 \(2023\)](#) on “Securing safe medical supply chains”.
2. The current system is ineffective: The shortages have become structural. They are adversely affecting patients’ health and undermining their human rights. People’s well-being and right to health protection are under threat. The Committee therefore appeals to the national and European authorities to switch to a human rights-based approach. Medical products cannot be governed by market rules alone.
3. The Committee encourages the national and European health authorities to support efforts to prevent and control medicine shortages and respond rapidly when supplies break down. It calls for more European co-operation in these three strategic areas.
4. It insists on the need for a paradigm shift which ensures equitable access to medicines, established on the principle of non-discrimination and according to medical criteria authorising priority access with a view to preventing corruption, arbitrary exceptions and priority access for the rich. The supply chain should no longer reinforce discrimination based on gender, poverty, ethnicity or any other vulnerability. Effective and proportionate penalties on the private sector should be put into place to ensure that medical products are available for those who need them.
5. The Committee welcomes the recent [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)1](#) on equitable access to medicinal products and medical equipment in a situation of shortage. It calls on national parliamentarians to monitor the situation and follow the human rights-based approach to govern supply policies.
6. Lastly, the Committee encourages the member states which have not yet done so to ratify the [Oviedo Convention on Biomedicine](#) (ETS No. 164) and its protocols, as well as the [Medicrime Convention](#) (CETS No. 211).