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PREFACE

It is an honour to contribute to this special issue of the *Archives of Hellenic Medicine*, dedicated to the Bodossaki Foundation's Action Plan for Public Health in the 21st Century. I warmly congratulate the Foundation for this bold and meaningful initiative. Independent institutions like Bodossaki are essential in today's world – they foster open dialogue, bring people together across sectors, and help drive the kind of long-term thinking that public health urgently needs.

In my role leading WHO's work on public health in the European region, I have had the opportunity to support countries in strengthening their public health systems, building leadership capacity, and advancing reforms that are both inclusive and sustainable. I have seen how much can be achieved when there is clear vision, collaboration, and strong leadership. These are all qualities that stand out in the Bodossaki Foundation's work and in the way this Action Plan was developed – through a participatory and inclusive process that involved professionals, policy makers, local authorities, civil society, and the academic community.

The Plan itself is impressive. It is a truly intersectoral,

evidence-informed, and forward-looking strategy. It reflects the values and priorities of the World Health Organization, particularly the Health for All vision, the focus on equity and the social determinants of health, and the need to build high quality resilient systems that can both prevent and respond to crises.

At the WHO Athens Office for Quality of Care and Patient Safety, which I have the privilege of leading, we place special emphasis on strengthening mental health, addressing childhood obesity, and promoting health. We greatly welcome the Bodossaki Foundation's timely and forward-looking decision to establish the Public Health Policy Observatory, and I am pleased to announce that the WHO Athens Office will serve as a strategic partner in this important initiative.

I fully support the goals of this Action Plan and I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to the next steps. I believe that with strong leadership, commitment, and collaboration, Greece can set an example for modern, people-centred public health in Europe and beyond.

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