



14th **AFRICAN TRADITIONAL MEDICINE DAY**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF PROMETRA International

My Beloved Brothers And Sisters,

Since Alma Ata conference in 1978, the World Health Organization-WHO-has always had a coherent vision for Traditional Medicine. Must we recall, in July 2001 at Lusaka Summit, African Heads of States took a historic position, making 2001-2010 decade for the rehabilitation of African Traditional Medicine. This important statement:

- recognizes the important role Traditional Medicine plays in African society,
- recognizes that Member States and their governments must necessarily develop a knowledge basis of traditional resources, in order to help achieve objective "**health for all** ...", mobilizing and using these resources in a more effective way,
- Approve Nairobi Declaration, which formally recognizes Traditional medicine as available financially,
- Asked to General Secretary, in collaboration with WHO, to assist Heads of states of African Union for the implementation of an action plan.

WHO, through its office for Traditional Medicine, published a remarkable strategic action plan for 2001-2005, highlighting policy issues, safety, efficiency and quality. Access to and rational use of Traditional and Alternative Medicine was highly recommended.

Given all these commitments ratified by the states, we must recognize that effective implementation will soon be more than 16 years. Several African countries have not yet established a legal framework for Traditional Medicine which drains 90% of the population and their needs for health.

In several African countries the budget allocated to this medicine varies between 0 and 5%; Africa continues to ruin his economics by importing an expensive medicine, questionable practices and medicines that are mostly useless placebos, toxic.

More than 400 drugs banned in North are officially on sale in pharmacies. Several times a year WCO (World Customs Organization) made huge seizures at ports and airports in Africa. It's worrying! ...

If "health is basis of all development," we do not understand why our health in many of our countries is still only in exogenous hands?! ... In this changing world, medicines and other pharmaceutical products from large laboratories in the North have shown their limits for the management of mental illness, psychosomatic, viral diseases, degenerative, essential etc. Leading scientists from the North are in our villages to plunder our traditional resources, meanwhile, governments tend our hands to them for solving our health problems. It will not be surprising if tomorrow North come teach to Africans medicine of their grandparents.

Why for over 5 decades of independence, we are going in circles?

- Is that a lack of policy willingness?
- Is that a lack of financial and economic support ?
- Is that because of absence of a legal and favorable administrative framework?
- Is that because of not adapted or badly conceived strategies, methodologies, research hypothesis?
- Is that because of the power of African countries is exogenous to Africa?
- Is that related to dictates of big pharmaceutical laboratories, who want to preserve their own interests?
- Is that because the intellectual African is limited, alienated, distorted ... and turns back on his own roots?
- Is that because Africa believes actually of being capable of anything, and that solutions to its problems must come from the North?
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It is everyone's responsibility to search for these answers.

In this disturbing context, WHO-AFRO invites us to celebrate 14th African of Traditional Medicine Day under the topic "**Regulation of Traditional Medicine Products in the African Region**".

In other words, WHO invites us to **regulate GREEN GOLD**, which will run tomorrow's world and a harmonious development of African continent. This topic is consistent and compelling in the current global context. Renewed

interest in Traditional Medicine products is growing exponentially all over the world except in Africa.

That is why PROMETRA International and its 28 national chapters worldwide congratulate and welcome WHO-AFRO for the relevance of topic of this 14th ATMD. PROMETRA International invites each and all members of our network to:

- Be closer to our core leaders we have the honor to serve, healers who are holders of this health legacy, to raise awareness and transfer their knowledge to their students and insiders,
- Organize days, seminars, workshops, fairs for products of Traditional Medicine, manifestations in form of advocacy with your governments, to educate, sensitize them on the need to consider as urgent task the regulations of Traditional Medicine products, if we want a future for our continent.

PROMETRA International invites all members of our network to involve media in the activities celebrating this important day. PROMETRA International hopes that this day is an opportunity to show that health and wellbeing of people has always been a concern of African traditional healers, since time immemorial.

Development is an endogenous process. Without rehabilitation of Traditional Medicine, without regulation of products of Traditional Medicine, without protection of Traditional Medicine products ..., no development is possible in Africa.

I appeal to the conscience of everyone to take this opportunity to lay the foundations of a health system that will always seek everywhere to find local solutions to our local problems.

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