

WHO calls for urgent action as deaths from heat surge in Europe



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Geneva, July 20 (RHC)-- Hans Kluge, the World Health Organization's director for Europe, said there is an urgent need to tackle the climate crisis after confirming that 60,000 people died in Europe due to extreme heat over the past year.

The number of deaths from extreme heat "is set to rise year-on-year." Current "danger zones" include southern and eastern Europe, Kluge said, urging the public to "regularly check weather reports, follow local guidance, and inform yourself about weather-related health risks from reputable sources."

"Beyond adapting to our new reality this summer, we must look to the years and decades ahead," he pointed out. "There is a desperate and urgent need for regional and global action to effectively tackle the climate crisis, which poses an existential threat to the human race."

In the long run, Kluge believes that the adoption of the Budapest Declaration, which prioritizes urgent, wide-ranging action on health challenges related to climate change, environmental pollution, etc., in the WHO European Region earlier this month, will go a long way toward addressing "the worst impacts of climate change on our health and health systems."

In particular, he believes the declaration will mobilize young people to get involved, "because they are truly engaged on the climate issues they are inheriting and often bursting with ideas and solutions."

"Action on climate change cannot be predicated on a particular government or political party; it truly needs to be a non-partisan issue championed by all sides of the political spectrum," Kluge said.

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