Committee A held nine meetings on 15, 19, 20, 21 and 22 May 1975.

At its first meeting, the Committee elected Dr Marcella Davies (Sierra Leone) Vice-Chairman and Dr B. Lekie (Zaire) Rapporteur, in accordance with the suggestions of the Committee on Nominations.¹

During the course of these meetings, while proceeding with the detailed review of the programme budget for the financial years 1976 and 1977, Committee A decided to recommend to the Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly the adoption of the attached resolutions on the following subjects:

WHO activities in regard to the development of methods of controlling the tropical parasitic diseases

Smallpox eradication programme

Schistosomiasis

Prevention of blindness

Mycotic diseases

¹ Document A28/42.
WHO ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF
METHODS OF CONTROLLING THE TROPICAL PARASITIC
DISEASES

The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly,

Drawing the attention of Member States once more to one of the most urgent public health problems in the developing countries today - the tropical parasitic diseases, and particularly onchocerciasis, filariasis, schistosomiasis and trypanosomiasis, which cause great damage to the people's health and retard social and economic progress in most of the developing countries;

Noting the steps taken by the Organization in accordance with resolution WHA27.52 to intensify research programmes on tropical parasitic diseases, as described in the Director-General's report on the work of WHO in 1974;

Considering it necessary to give priority attention to the development of recommendations and methods for these programmes for the control of the most important tropical parasitic diseases and primarily the programmes for the control of onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, etc., which are being already carried out or are at the active planning stage, using to this end all the experience accumulated by the Member States;

Welcoming the WHO biomedical research effort in this field,

1. URGES Member States, research and practical establishments and medical scientists working on aspects of tropical pathology to intensify their efforts to develop effective, safe and practicable means of controlling tropical parasitic diseases; and

2. REQUESTS the Director-General to undertake the measures needed to improve the system of coordinating the various programmes for the control of the tropical parasitic diseases and also the methods of carrying out these programmes and to pay special attention to these aspects in the report he is to make to the Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly under the terms of resolution WHA27.52.
SMALLPOX ERADICATION PROGRAMME

The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the Director-General's report on the smallpox eradication programme;

Noting with satisfaction the considerable successes achieved in carrying out the programme, as witness the sharp reduction in the number of cases of smallpox in countries where it is endemic;

Considering that the progress made and the unflagging efforts and care of WHO and its Member States in carrying out this programme inspire confidence that smallpox eradication will soon be achieved throughout the world;

Bearing in mind that the successful completion of this programme will be the first example of the eradication of a disease by man as a result of broad international cooperation and the collective efforts of WHO, its Member States and various international governmental and nongovernmental organizations;

Recognizing that the success of the programme has been dependent on its profoundly scientific basis, on unceasing research and practical investigations throughout the course of its implementation, on making correct allowances for the special features of the causal agent of smallpox and the nature of immunity to it, on the considerable improvements achieved in the last few years in the quality and effectiveness of the smallpox vaccine, on the development and wide practical introduction of new methods of mass vaccination and on constant improvements in systems for case-finding and for the recording of vaccinations;

Noting also that the entry of the smallpox eradication programme into its final stage has been the result of lengthy and heroic efforts by numerous countries, international organizations, establishments, physicians and field workers, both in the period up till the 1950s when national campaigns were developing and when the prerequisite conditions were being created for smallpox control on an international scale and after the proclamation and development of an international smallpox eradication campaign in accordance with resolution WHA11.54 in 1958 and the intensification of the programme from 1967 onwards in accordance with resolution WHA19.16, and

Expressing confidence that with continued effort the countries so near the end will achieve eradication,

1. CONGRATULATES the countries which, since the inception of the Global Programme, have made the outstanding achievement of eradicating smallpox from within their borders;

2. THANKS all governments, organizations and individuals who have contributed to the implementation of the programme and asks them to continue to increase their efforts for smallpox eradication in this concluding stage of the programme;

3. EMPHASIZES the need to increase the vigilance and sense of responsibility in all regions of the world, with a view to preventing possible outbreaks of smallpox so as not to let slip the favourable situation for the successful conclusion of the programme that now exists, by continuing active epidemiological surveillance and the corresponding vaccination programmes, particularly for new-born children;

4. DEEMS it necessary to summarize and describe in a major publication the experience of smallpox eradication throughout the world, for which purpose the help should be enlisted of scientific experts and practical workers who have taken part in carrying out the programme, having first analysed with great care and thus preserved for mankind the unique historical experience of the eradication of one of the most dangerous communicable diseases as a result of effective international cooperation, experience which will doubtless be used in programmes for the control of other communicable diseases;
5. REQUESTS the Director-General of the World Health Organization:

(a) to draw up recommendations regarding those further activities of the Organization and its Member States that will be needed to maintain smallpox eradication throughout the world, including possible changes in the International Health Regulations;

(b) to ensure the wider development of research on methods of differentiating viruses of the poxvirus group and determining the special features of their epidemiology, paying particular attention to variola-like viruses (white strains) isolated from monkeys and to other monkey viruses; and

(c) to submit a report on further developments in this sphere to the Executive Board at one of its sessions or to a World Health Assembly.
SCHISTOSOMIASIS

The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolutions EB5.R5 and EB55.R22 on schistosomiasis;

Noting that the disease remains largely uncontrolled and that its prevalence is increasing; and that water development projects designed to improve needed agricultural production and to improve needed economic conditions undertaken without consideration given to preventive health measures may contribute to this increase;

Noting the increasing evidence of the possible occurrence of serious complications and sequelae as a result of schistosomiasis infection;

Noting further that the World Food Conference emphasized the need for greatly increased food production and noted that meeting nutritional and other requirements of the world's expanding population will require more projects to impound water and irrigate fields;

Expressing the view that proper engineering design of water management projects can have considerable importance in limiting the spread of schistosomiasis among populations affected by such projects;

Noting the inclusion of schistosomiasis within the coordinated biomedical research programme of the Organization;

Recognizing that effective planning for, and operation of, schistosomiasis control activities requires close cooperation and coordination among agencies within the United Nations system, the international financial community and ministries within national governments under the leadership of the World Health Organization;

Expressing appreciation for the report of the Director-General which outlines the complexity of the problems involved to prove the feasibility of schistosomiasis control;

Looking forward to the important international meeting on schistosomiasis which is scheduled to be held in Cairo in October 1975; and

Recognizing the very high costs of implementation of control programmes using present available methods,

REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to prepare and keep guidelines current on the development of water management projects including engineering specifications, to minimize the possibility of the spread of schistosomiasis and other water borne disease in water management projects;

(2) to advise countries and donor organizations on the application of guidelines on water development, including hydro-electric, projects planned, under construction, or completed;

(3) to request members to make available information on schistosomiasis control programmes underway or carried out in their countries, including details of research work, manpower development programmes, costs, etc.;
(4) to seek extra-budgetary support and assistance from various sources within the United Nations system and international and private agencies in order to provide assistance

(a) to governments in planning and carrying out studies of the epidemiology of the disease, the cost effectiveness of alternative methods of control and its social and economic impact,

(b) to governments in the preparation and implementation of control programmes,

(5) to stimulate increased efforts in research in drug development, chemotherapy, epidemiology, control including methodologies for self-help, and immunological aspects of schistosomiasis;

(6) to draw the attention of Member States where the disease is not endemic to the desirability of organizing epidemiological surveillance within health services; and

(7) to report on this matter to the Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly.
PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly,

Recognizing the great human suffering and the financial burden caused by blindness and the fact that a large part of such blindness could be prevented or cured;

Taking into account the resolutions on prevention of blindness adopted by previous World Health Assemblies (WHA22.29 and WHA25.55) and the report of the Study Group1 convened by WHO in 1972, as well as the adoption of "Foresight prevents blindness" as the theme for World Health Day in 1976; and

Recognizing the potential contribution of governmental and non-governmental organizations,

1. EXPRESSES its appreciation of the work already undertaken in this connexion by WHO, especially with regard to some major causes of blindness, such as onchocerciasis, trachoma and others;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(a) to continue these efforts;

(b) to encourage member countries to develop national programmes for the prevention of blindness especially aimed at the control of trachoma, xerophthalmia, onchocerciasis and other causes and to introduce adequate measures for the early detection and treatment of other potentially blinding conditions such as cataract and glaucoma;

(c) to encourage national and international non-governmental organizations to mobilize financial and other resources for the implementation of this programme; and

(d) to report to the World Health Assembly on developments in the control of blindness in general and of onchocerciasis, trachoma and xerophthalmia in particular.

MYCOTIC DISEASES

The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly,

Having examined the programme budget submitted by the Director-General for the financial years 1976 and 1977;

Noting with satisfaction the important place given in this programme budget to the control of communicable diseases in general;

Considering that superficial and internal mycotic infections are extremely widespread both in industrial and developing countries, and that they amount to an important medico-social problem,

1. INVITES the health authorities of Member States to give mycotic infections the attention warranted by their prevalence and medico-social importance;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General to provide assistance within the Organization's programme to epidemiological studies on superficial and internal mycotic infections and to provide Member States with appropriate technical advice on their control; and

3. REQUESTS the Director-General to report to the Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly on the public health importance of mycotic diseases in WHO Member States.