

## **International Decade of the World's Indigenous People**

The Fifty-fourth World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolutions WHA47.27, WHA48.24, WHA49.26, WHA50.31, WHA51.24 and WHA53.10 on WHO's contribution to achieving the objectives of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1994-2003);

Further recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 50/157, which adopted the programme of activities for the International Decade, in which it is recommended that "specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other international and national agencies, as well as communities and private enterprises, should devote special attention to development activities of benefit to indigenous communities"; that focal points for matters concerning indigenous people should be established in all appropriate organizations of the United Nations system; and that the governing bodies of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system should adopt programmes of action for the Decade in their own field of competence, "in close cooperation with indigenous people";

Welcoming the decision by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2000/22 of 28 July 2000 to establish a Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues as an advisory body to the Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues within the mandate of the Council relating to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights, thereby fulfilling an important objective of the Decade;

Commending the progress made in the Region of the Americas on the Initiative on the Health of Indigenous People of the Americas;

Deeply concerned about the disparities in health conditions of indigenous people in comparison to the overall population,

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to recognize and protect the right of indigenous people to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, as mentioned in the WHO Constitution, within overall national development policies;

(2) to make adequate provisions for indigenous health needs in their national health systems, including through improved collection and reporting of statistics and health data;

- (3) to respect, preserve and maintain traditional healing practices and remedies, consistent with nationally and internationally accepted standards, and to seek to ensure that indigenous people retain this traditional knowledge and its benefits;
2. REQUESTS WHO's regional committees to give urgent attention to the adoption of regional plans of action on indigenous health that take into account, as appropriate, the health conclusions and recommendations of the "International Consultation on the Health of Indigenous Peoples" (Geneva, November 1999);
3. REQUESTS the Director-General:
  - (1) to strengthen the partnership with indigenous people in all appropriate WHO activities;
  - (2) to collaborate with partners in health and development for protection and promotion of the right of the world's indigenous people to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, as mentioned in the WHO Constitution, including through the use of accurate and up-to-date information on indigenous health status;
  - (3) to complete, in close consultation with national governments and organizations of indigenous people, a framework for a global plan of action to improve the health of indigenous people, with particular emphasis on an approach geared to the needs of those in developing countries and the determinants of health, for submission to the Fifty-fifth World Health Assembly with the aim of finalizing the global plan of action by the end of the Decade;
  - (4) to cooperate with and to support the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in its role as lead agency for the establishment of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and with other specialized agencies and Member States, in preparation for the Forum's inaugural meeting in 2002, including by submission of information on indigenous health issues.

Ninth plenary meeting, 22 May 2001  
A54/VR/9

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