

## **Report of the Regional Committee for the Americas**

**29th Pan American Sanitary Conference of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Sixty-ninth session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Americas (Washington, DC, United States of America, 25 to 29 September 2017)**

**Summary report by the President**

**(Dr Antonio Carlos Barrios Fernández, Minister of Health, Paraguay)<sup>1</sup>**

### **PART 1: TOPICS FOR GLOBAL DISCUSSION**

#### **Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)**

The Regional Committee examined a report on progress in implementing the Regulations in the Region (Document [CSP29/INF/6](#)), which also contained a summary of the main conclusions of a regional consultation on the draft five-year global strategic plan to improve public health preparedness and response, held in Brazil in July 2017.<sup>2</sup> The report of the 2017 consultation also reflected views expressed during regional consultations in 2015 and 2016.

The Committee endorsed the conclusions of the regional consultation. Support was expressed for the nine guiding principles of the five-year plan, but Member States viewed the plan as a work in progress and called for its revision in order to achieve the desired strategic intent. Delegates emphasized that strategic pillar 1 should link the IHR core capacities with essential public health functions and should reflect the variation across States parties with respect to both the maturity of their health systems and the status of their implementation of the Regulations. There was broad agreement that the IHR Monitoring and Evaluation Framework should be presented as a stand-alone document, separate from the draft global strategic plan, for consideration and adoption by the Seventy-first World Health Assembly in May 2018. Member States stressed that the views expressed in the regional consultations held in 2015, 2016, and 2017 should be taken into account in the ongoing consultative process and requested that the report of the 2017 consultation be submitted to the WHO Executive Board.

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<sup>1</sup> The full report of the session (document CSP29/FR) and all documents and resolutions mentioned in this report are available from:

[http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=13497&Itemid=2105&lang=en](http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13497&Itemid=2105&lang=en)

<sup>2</sup> The full report of the regional consultation is available from:

[http://www.paho.org/disasters/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_view&gid=2523&Itemid=270](http://www.paho.org/disasters/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=2523&Itemid=270)

## **PART 2: TOPICS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Pan American Sanitary Conference, Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas, re-elected Dr. Carissa Etienne for a second term as Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau for a period of five years, beginning on 1 February 2018 and ending on 31 January 2023, and submitted her name to the WHO Executive Board for appointment as Regional Director of WHO for the Americas for the same period. ([Document CSP29/3](#) and Resolution [CSP29.R10](#))

The Committee approved several amendments to the Strategic Plan of the Pan American Health Organization 2014–2019 (Document [OD345](#) and Resolution [CSP29.R5](#)) and adopted a programme and budget for PAHO for the 2018–2019 biennium (Document [OD354](#) and Resolutions [CSP29.R6](#) and [CSP29.R14](#)). The Committee adopted the Sustainable Health Agenda for the Americas 2018–2030 (Document [CSP29/6, Rev. 3](#) and Resolution [CSP29.R2](#)) setting out goals and targets to be achieved in that period. The Committee also discussed the implications of the global shortage of inactivated poliovirus vaccine and adopted a resolution authorizing the Regional Director to conduct negotiations with a view to ensuring an adequate supply of the vaccine through the PAHO Revolving Fund for Vaccine Procurement. (Document [CSP29/16](#) and [CSP29.R16](#))

The following policies, strategies and plans of action were also approved.

### **Policy on Ethnicity and Health**

The policy (Document [CSP29/7, Rev. 1](#) and Resolution [CSP29.R3](#)) urges Member States to consider the connection between ethnicity and health, and to promote an intercultural approach that will contribute, inter alia, to the elimination of access barriers to health services and improve health outcomes for indigenous peoples, Afrodescendants, Roma, and members of other ethnic groups, as appropriate, considering their national contexts, priorities, and regulatory frameworks. The policy is aligned with various international declarations and initiatives and with the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014–2023.

### **Plan of Action for the Sustainability of Measles, Rubella, and Congenital Rubella Syndrome Elimination in the Americas 2018–2023**

The plan (Document [CSP29/8](#) and Resolution [CSP29.R11](#)) is in keeping with the policies and strategic lines for promoting the elimination of measles and rubella in the WHO Global Vaccine Action Plan and the WHO Global Measles and Rubella Strategic Plan 2012–2020 and sets out four strategic lines of action, together with targets and indicators, for monitoring progress towards the permanent sustainability of measles, rubella and congenital rubella syndrome elimination in the Region of the Americas.

## **Plan of Action for the Strengthening of Vital Statistics 2017–2022**

The plan (Document [CSP29/9](#) and Resolution [CSP29.R4](#)) aims to contribute to the strengthening of national vital statistics systems within the framework of health information systems, achieve universal registration of births and deaths and improve the quality of registration of causes of death. It responds to the need for information and analysis indicated in various regional and global commitments, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## **Strategy on Human Resources for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage**

The strategy (Document [CSP29/10](#) and Resolution [CSP29.R15](#)) sets out three lines of action to guide Member States in developing human resources policies and plans with a view to achieving the objectives of the regional Strategy for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage<sup>3</sup> and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is in line with the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 and the Five-year Action Plan for Health Employment and Inclusive Economic Growth (2017-2021).

## **Strategy and Plan of Action to Strengthen Tobacco Control in the Region of the Americas 2018–2022**

The strategy and plan of action (Document [CSP29/11](#)) are aimed at accelerating the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in the Region by encouraging Member States to adopt the measures recommended as “best buys” for reducing tobacco use under the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020. The resolution (Resolution [CSP29.R12](#)) approving the strategy and plan of action urges Member States that are parties to the Framework Convention to consider ratifying the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products in order to ensure its speedy entry into force.

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<sup>3</sup> [Document CD53/5, Rev. 2](#), and [Resolution CD53.R14](#).