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ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION

The Director-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the Executive Board for information the report of the second session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean held in Geneva from 12-15 October, 1949.

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATIONORGANISATION MONDIALE
DE LA SANTÉREGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR
THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEANRC2/EM/28 Rev. 1
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REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION

The second session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, 12 - 15 October 1949, under the alternate Chairmanship of Dr. Neil Karabuda (Turkey) and Mr. H. Bahar (Pakistan), Vice-Chairmen¹, was attended by representatives for all the countries within the region, and by observers from two of the specialized agencies².

Brief addresses were made by Sir Aly Shousha, Pasha, Regional Director of the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office; Dr. W. P. Forrest, on behalf of the Director-General of WHO, and Dr. Neil Karabuda (Turkey).

National health problems, resources in terms of experts, institutions and exchange facilities, and urgent needs for health development were outlined.

1. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

The Regional Committee

ADOPTED the provisional agenda; and

POSTPONED to its third session consideration of amendments to the Rules of Procedure proposed by the representative of the United Kingdom.

2. WHO Activities in the region during 1949

The Regional Committee

NOTES the report of the Regional Director and the comments thereon by the representatives from Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon and Egypt.

3. Programme Sub-Committee

The Regional Committee

ESTABLISHED a sub-committee on Programme to consider programmes for 1950, the committee to be a committee of the whole³.

Acting on the proposals of the sub-committee, the Regional Committee adopted the following decisions and resolutions:

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- 1 In the absence of the Chairman, Dr. N. Scandar, Pasha (Egypt)
 - 2 For list of representatives, alternates, advisers and observers, see Annex.
 - 3 Officers elected H.E. Dr. M. Nazif, Bey (Egypt) Chairman,
Dr. Rachad Pharaon (Saudi Arabia) Vice-Chairman, and
Dr. M. Aziz, Bey (United Kingdom) Rapporteur.

4. Programme for 1950

After discussing in detail the summary statements of programme and requirements for 1950 from each country and the facilities available for assistance in meeting the needs of the various members of the region,

The Regional Committee

DECIDES to refer these requests to the Regional Director for action in accordance with the accepted procedure.

4.1 Specific Problems

4.1.1 Public Health Administration

CONSIDERING

- (1) that Public Health administration is a fundamental problem that uniformly concerns all the countries of the Region;
- (2) that without a basic health organization it is impossible to operate long-term programmes for promotion of national health;
- (3) that a sound health organization calls for specialized personnel, medical and non-medical, including nurses, sanitary engineers and trained assistants;
- (4) that some countries in the region are still in the preliminary stage of development of their Public Health Services;

RECOMMENDS

1. that countries
 - (a) make adequate allocations in their national budgets for development of organized Public Health Services on a national basis;
 - (b) provide funds for adequate training of the necessary personnel; and
2. that the Regional Office
 - (a) give all possible assistance to the countries in the Region by:
 - (i) encouraging and promoting the development and improvement of the national health services;
 - (ii) extending facilities for training by fellowships; and
 - (iii) providing expert advice.
 - (b) give priority to those regional programmes which are directly concerned with the training and development of strong national health administrations, in accordance with the decisions of the World Health Assembly.

4.1.1.1 Public Health Organization

Advisory Services

The Regional Committee

NOTES that the advisory services of an expert on Public Health Administration are available in the Regional Office.

Demonstration Areas

The Regional Committee

RECOGNIZES that establishment of a demonstration area in the region would involve commitments by a government willing to participate in establishing such an area; and

NOTES the offers to participate in a demonstration area in the region made by the representatives from Egypt, Iran and Pakistan.

4.1.1.2 Environmental Sanitation

The Regional Committee

NOTES that the advisory services of an expert on Environmental Sanitation are available in the Regional Office.

4.1.1.3 Nursing

The Regional Committee

NOTES that the advisory services of an expert in Nursing will be available in the Regional Office in the near future; and

REQUESTS the Regional Director in the meantime to negotiate for such advisory services from the Rockefeller Foundation.

4.1.1.4 Health Education of the Public

The Regional Committee

NOTES that expert advisory services on Health Education are now available from Headquarters;

NOTES that the facilities of the Health Propaganda Section of the Egyptian Ministry of Health are available to other members in the region in connexion with their health education programmes;

RECOGNIZES that although Health Education of the public is primarily a national problem, additional assistance would enable member countries to expand their activities; and

RECOMMENDS that the Regional Office produce health educational material in the form of libraries, films, models and exhibits, etc., suitable for local needs, such material to be made available to the Member Nations for use in their National Health campaigns.

4.1.2 Control of Communicable Diseases

4.1.2.1 Malaria

The Regional Committee

NOTES the decision of the Second World Health Assembly to assist the Malaria Institute of Pakistan to enable it to hold courses in Malariology for the region;

CONSIDERS that such courses are urgently needed for the rapid development of the Malaria programme in the region; and

RECOMMENDS that the Regional Office take immediate steps to assist in organizing these courses as early as possible.

IN VIEW of reports of unsatisfactory results obtained with DDT in Lebanon and Israel,

The Regional Committee

RECOMMENDS that the Regional Office undertake to investigate such reports; and

NOTES the offer by the representative from Israel that the facilities of the Government Malaria Research Station in Israel may be utilized for these investigations.

4.1.2.2 Bejel

The Regional Committee

Having considered:

1. The particular susceptibility of Treponemata to penicillin treatment:
2. The extent and the regional character of Bejel:
3. The prevalence of the disease in infants and lower age groups:
4. The desirability of further study of the nature and extent of the problem, as well as
5. The social and economic necessity for developing practical control measures to effectively combat the disease on a large scale:

APPROVES

1. The action taken by WHO following the initial proposal of Iraq at the First World Health Assembly to include bejel among the activities of WHO;
2. The project outlined for attacking the problem in the Eastern Mediterranean area:

RECOGNIZES that the problem is of importance to the region, and

RECOMMENDS

1. That action be taken by the Regional Director and the Director-General of WHO for further development and implementation of this project;
2. That budgetary provisions be made by WHO under the 1950 syphilis control programme to initiate the proposals; and
3. That appropriate action be taken for UNICEF participation - to the extent of furnishing supplies and equipment - for the activities of the demonstration area for bejel control, proposed in WHO/VD/23, and subsequent large scale programmes.

4.1.2.3. Tuberculosis

CONSIDERING that, in most of the countries of the Region, tuberculosis control is still in the early stages of development;

that the lack of adequate numbers of personnel trained in the modern methods of tuberculosis control is one of the most important problems in this field;

that the closest co-ordination is desirable between governmental programmes and voluntary activities;

The Regional Committee

NOTES with satisfaction the proposals of the representatives for Lebanon, Egypt, Pakistan and Turkey that tuberculosis training projects be initiated in those countries; and

RECOMMENDS

- (a) That the Regional Office take every possible step to expand and develop the tuberculosis control programme in the Region by assisting in the organization of Regional Tuberculosis Training Projects in suitable countries where adequate facilities are available;
- (b) That, in countries where Tuberculosis Control Departments have not yet been organized, such a department be established within the framework of the National Health Authority; and

- (c) That voluntary effort in the antituberculosis campaign be encouraged and co-ordinated with the governmental programmes.

4.1.2.4 Other Communicable Diseases

Cholera

The Regional Committee

NOTES the report of the Regional Director regarding the forthcoming study tour of the WHO/OIHP Cholera Group which will render services to Pakistan;

Smallpox

The Regional Committee

RECOMMENDS to the countries in the region that vaccination be made compulsory where this is not already in force, and that such vaccination be free of charge.

Trachoma

The Regional Committee

AGREES that trachoma should be considered as a matter of regional importance, and noted with satisfaction the steps which the Regional Director proposes to take for investigating the treatment and method of control.

Whooping Cough

The Regional Committee

RECOMMENDS that the Regional Director investigate the questions of vaccination against whooping cough.

Leishmaniasis

The Regional Committee

RECOGNIZES the importance of Leishmaniasis in the region; and

RECOMMENDS that the Regional Director investigate the problem of its control and treatment.

4.1.3 Promotion of Health

4.1.3.1 Maternal and Child Health

The Regional Committee

RECOMMENDS that in countries where a Maternal and Child Health department has not yet been organized, such a department be established within the framework of the National Health Authority;

DRAWS attention to the necessity for the development of adequate nursing services in order that the work of such a department may be effective; and

REQUESTS the Regional Director to draw the attention of UNICEF to the necessity for allocation of funds to Child Health Projects in this region.

4.1.3.2. Nutrition

RECOGNIZING the importance of Nutrition in health programmes and the consequent need for adequate scientific surveys,

The Regional Committee

WELCOMES the proposal for co-ordinating the work of the relevant specialized agencies in this field at the regional level with particular reference to the Joint FAO/WHO Project for assisting in the development of a National Nutritional Training Centre in Egypt technicians and medical personnel, and

RECOMMENDS

that the Regional Office take the necessary steps to expedite the creation of the proposed National Training Centre and to utilize its facilities for the training of the various categories of personnel from the different countries in the region.

4.1.3.3 Mental Health

The Regional Committee

NOTES with interest the report submitted on mental health and that the services of a consultant will be available in 1950.

4.1.4 Professional Technical Education

The Regional Committee

NOTES the information submitted, regarding assistance to institutes, fellowships, and supply of medical literature and teaching equipment.

4.1.5. Interchange of Health Personnel

In view of the great scarcity of technical health personnel in the region, and the paucity of training facilities;

Having regard to the desirability of broadening the experience of the health personnel in each country; and

In order to make full use of the experience and facilities already available in the region so that the relatively limited resources for fellowship training may be used in the most efficient manner;

The Regional Committee

RESOLVES that the Regional Director be requested to initiate and expedite negotiations between the Health Administrations of the region for the intra-regional interchange of technical health personnel so that the resources of the region may be the more efficiently deployed; and

CALLES upon all governments in the region to facilitate these arrangements.

4.1.6 Medical Supplies

The Regional Committee

NOTES that different categories of assistance in medical supplies are available from Headquarters.

4.1.7 Programme for 1951

The Regional Committee

RECOMMENDS that the activities to be required in the region during 1951 would be similar to those proposed for 1950, and that a programme for 1951 along the same general lines as that for 1950, consolidated and modified in minor respects where necessary, would meet the requirements.

5. Health Problems of Refugees in Palestine

The Regional Committee

HAVING reviewed the sad position of the Palestine Refugees; and

CONSIDERING that the continuation of such conditions may threaten the neighbouring countries from the public health point of view and may even threaten other countries in other regions;

NOTES the report of the Chief Medical Officer UNRPR seconded by WHO;

COMMENDS the temporary measures taken by WHO and UNRPR to ameliorate the condition of the refugees;

REQUESTS the State Members of this region, pending a permanent solution, to urge upon the General Assembly of the United Nations the necessity for adequate funds to continue the health measures; and

REQUESTS the Regional Director to communicate to the United Nations the unanimous opinion of this Committee that immediate measures to solve the problem of resettlement are the only solution to the urgent public health problems in view of the present condition of the refugees.

6. Epidemiological Services

Having discussed the quarantine problems of Saudi Arabia and the French coast of Somaliland;

The Regional Committee

AGREES that the Member States should refer such problems direct to the Director-General for transmission to the relevant Expert Committees scheduled to meet in December.

The Regional Committee

NOTES the proposals on the Sanitary Conventions and Epidemiological Intelligence Services within the WHO,¹ and

REQUESTS the Regional Director to submit these proposals to the Expert Committee on International Epidemiology and Quarantine for their views.

7. Co-ordination of Planning and Operations with Other International Organizations at Regional Level

The Regional Committee

NOTES the methods of co-ordination of planning and operations with other international organizations at the regional level, and

NOTES that the Regional Director will confer with the regional representatives of these Organizations in the near future.

Having discussed the co-operative programme between Governments, FAO and WHO to increase food production and raise standards of health (A2/54), and

Having noted that all the countries in the region are interested in this programme, and that FAO has already been consulted on the proposal made by Pakistan;

REQUESTS the Regional Director to contact all the Governments in the region as soon as possible regarding their proposals on this matter, and to collect all the necessary information, including all existing agricultural and health information about the area proposed, any previous surveys, and other relevant material; and

CALLS upon the Regional Director to stimulate such action.

8. Administrative and Financial Matters

Considering that it is highly desirable to have as large an attendance as possible at the Regional Meetings, and that many countries may not be in a position to defray the expenses incurred in attending such meetings,

¹ WHO/EPID/23

The Regional Committee

REQUESTS the Executive Board to reconsider its decision regarding non-payment of transportation charges.

9. Resolutions of the Second World Health Assembly

The Regional Committee

9.1 NOTES those resolutions of the Second World Health Assembly of particular interest to the regions (RC2/EM/2 and RC2/EM/2 Add. 1)

9.2 NOTES with satisfaction that the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan and Pakistan have already ratified the General Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies;

that Turkey has taken steps in that direction; and

CALLS upon all other members of the Region to take similar action as early as possible.

9.3 CALLS on those members in the Region who have not denounced the Rome agreement to take such action as soon as possible.

9.4 REQUESTS the Regional Director to make the necessary arrangements for holding a conference within the Region for the purpose of studying health statistics and the methods of their initiation and improvement in the different countries, and to arrange for the services of a consultant or an adviser; and

NOTES the offer of the representative of Israel that the statistical services of his country are available to assist the members in the region.

9.5 NOTES the report of the Regional Director regarding progress on the negotiations in connection with the Host Agreement with the Government of Egypt.

9.6 CALLS on Member States in the region to waive customs duty on insecticides and pharmaceuticals required for the welfare of the people;

10. Other Business

The Regional Committee

REQUESTS the Regional Director to keep the countries of the region informed of all projects to be carried out within the region and on those projects which may be postponed by the Director-General as "approved projects" to be put into operation when finance becomes available.

11. Time and Place of Third Session

The Regional Committee

RESOLVES to hold its next meeting in Ankara, Turkey, in the first week of September 1950.

LIST OF REPRESENTATIVES, ADVISERS AND OBSERVERS
LISTE DES REPRESENTANTS, CONSEILLERS ET OBSERVATEURS

EGYPT
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H.E. Dr. M Nazif, Bey
Under-Secretary of State
Ministry of Public Health
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Alternate
Suppléant

Dr M. Sabry el Far, Bey
Deputy Director
Quarantine Department
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Advisers
Conseillers

Dr H. M. Elliot
Assistant Director
Sudan Medical Service
Khartoum

Dr Ibrahim Anis
D/Asst. Director (Quarantine)
Ministry of Health
Khartoum

ETHIOPIA
ETHIOPIE

Mr. G. Zallaka
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Légation d'Ethiopie
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Adviser
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Dr F. B. Hylander
Inspector-General
Principal Adviser
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FRANCE

Médecin-Colonel Jacques Helfft
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S. E. Dr Abbas Naficy
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HASHEMITE KINGDOM
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Represented by the Representative
from Iraq (Professor Hashim Alwitry)
Représenté par le représentant de
l'Irak

LEBANON
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S. E. Dr Elias El-Khoury
Ministère de l'Hygiène et de
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Minister of Health (Vice-President)
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Dr Omar Akbani
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Alternate
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Dr Mohamed el-Khashekgi
Inspector-General of Health
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Chargé d'Affaires de Syrie,
Légation de Syrie
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TURQUIE

Dr Nail Karabuda (Vice-Chairman)
Sous-secrétaire d'Etat Adjoint (Vice-President)
au Ministère de l'Hygiène
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