INTERNATIONAL DRINKING WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION DECADE

The Thirty-fourth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report\(^1\) of the Director-General relating to the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990);

Stressing that the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation services is one of the essential elements of primary health care, and one of the essential global targets for Health for All;

Noting with concern that progress made in the 1970s in improving drinking water and sanitation services was slower than expected;

Considering that wide acceptance by Member States of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade offers a new incentive to provide people with these essential services; and that maximum use should be made of all opportunities afforded by the Decade to promote the attainment of Health for All;

Recognizing the need to monitor specific measurable indicators of the impact on health of improved water supplies and sanitation developed during the Decade, so as to help mobilize the substantial necessary resources, foster community participation and further encourage international support for that programme;

Aware that the Decade presents an opportunity to eliminate dracunculiasis (Guinea worm disease) as a public health problem in affected areas, where the prevalence of the disease could serve as a uniquely visible and measurable indicator of progress for the Decade;

Restating the principles\(^2\) endorsed by the Thirty-third World Health Assembly that Decade efforts will contribute to Health for All through:

- complementarity of sanitation with water supply development;
- focus on both rural and urban underserved populations in policies and programmes;
- achievement of full coverage through replicable, self-reliant and self-sustaining programmes;
- use of socially relevant systems applying an appropriate technology;
- association of the community with all stages of programmes and projects;
- close relation of water supply and sanitation programmes with those in other sectors;
- association of water supply and sanitation with other health programmes;

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\(^{1}\) Document A34/4.

\(^{2}\) Document A33/15.
1. NOTES with appreciation the report of the Director-General;

2. RECOMMENDS to its Member States:
   (1) to accelerate substantially the pace of their programmes for drinking water supply and sanitation through the adoption of relevant policies and their implementation through plans aimed at covering the total population;
   (2) to strengthen or establish suitable mechanisms, such as National Action Committees, to facilitate policy formulation, the elaboration of national Decade plans, the strengthening of relevant programmes of all involved national agencies and their active participation at all levels, and the best use of available external resources, recognizing the UNDP resident representatives as focal points for international action at the country level;
   (3) to focus programmes on their national priority health problems and monitor resulting impact on health, giving particular attention to the reduction of diarrhoeal diseases and in specifically affected countries, to other preventable water- or sanitation-related infections such as schistosomiasis, dracunculiasis, etc.;
   (4) to incorporate activities for the improvement of drinking water supply and sanitation services into their national programmes for Primary Health Care, particularly in respect of people's education and involvement, training of community workers, and strengthening the support capacity at all levels of referral; and
   (5) to strengthen the ability of national health agencies to take an active role in planning and implementing programmes for the Decade.

3. FURTHER RECOMMENDS TO MEMBER STATES
   (1) to promote the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade in international intergovernmental organizations in such a way as to make coordination more effective at the country level;
   (2) to propose relevant water supply and sanitation programmes and projects for external support in a manner consistent with the principles set forth above;

4. INVITES THE MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL AGENCIES CONCERNED to support national giving priority to programmes and projects consistent with the above principles;

5. REQUESTS the Director-General:
   (1) to further develop and implement WHO's strategy of support of the Decade in conformity with resolutions WHA29.47, WHA30.33, WHA31.40 and WHA32.11 as well as decision 17 of the Thirty-third World Health Assembly;
   (2) to ensure the effective fulfilment by WHO of its central technical role with respect to the International Decade, including support to the coordinating mechanisms of the United Nations system and continued collaboration with member countries to specify achievable health-related targets for the Decade;
   (3) to cooperate with Member States, the other agencies in the United Nations system and with the multilateral and bilateral agencies concerned in exchanging information and facilitating support to relevant projects and programmes for which external resources are sought;
   (4) to cooperate with Member States in assessing experience accruing from the implementation of national programmes and particularly information pertaining to impact of these programmes on the health of communities; and to disseminate this information widely among Member States, the other agencies of the United Nations system and multilateral and bilateral agencies;
(5) to report on these matters periodically to future Health Assemblies during the Decade.