The Forty-second World Health Assembly,

Noting the report of the Director-General on the Expanded Programme on Immunization and the Executive Board's discussion on the report;¹

Appreciating the accomplishments of the programme to date, including the provision of immunization services for over half the children of the developing world and the prevention each year of some 1.9 million deaths of children in developing countries from measles, pertussis and neonatal tetanus, and of over 200 000 cases of poliomyelitis;

Recognizing, however, that full immunization coverage has not yet been achieved in all countries and that over 3 million deaths from the above diseases and over 200 000 cases of poliomyelitis preventable through immunization continue to occur each year;

Aware that further challenges need to be addressed during the decade of the 1990s with respect to:

- achieving and sustaining in all countries full immunization coverage with all the antigens used by the Expanded Programme;

- controlling the target diseases, including the global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000, the reduction of measles by 90% compared with pre-immunization levels, and the elimination of neonatal tetanus by 1995;

- improving surveillance to provide accurate assessment of the progress of the programme;

- introducing within routine national immunization services new or improved vaccines as these become available for public health use;

- promoting other primary health care practices which are appropriate for the programme’s delivery system and the target populations;

- research and development in support of the above;

1. RECALLS resolution WHA41.28 which committed WHO to the global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000 and, inter alia, emphasized that eradication efforts should be pursued in ways which strengthen the development of the Expanded Programme on Immunization as a whole, fostering its contribution, in turn, to the development of the health infrastructure and of primary health care;

¹ See document EB83/1989/REC/2, summary records of the Board's eleventh and twelfth meetings.
2. ENDORSES the plans outlined in the report for the programme for the coming decade, including the plan for the eradication of poliomyelitis;

3. URGES all Member States to continue their vigorous pursuit of the aim of providing immunization services for all children of the world in the hope that coverage levels under the Expanded Programme will surpass 80% in all countries/areas by the end of 1990 and that levels of 90%, in the context of comprehensive maternal and child health services, can be achieved by the year 2000;

4. ASKS the regional committees to promote the establishment of national disease reduction targets for all the diseases included within national immunization programmes, including targets for geographically limited areas and targets for locally defined populations at risk, as appropriate;

5. THANKS the international community (including other organizations of the United Nations system, multilateral and bilateral development agencies, private and voluntary groups and individuals) for their continuing support, giving special recognition to UNICEF as WHO's major partner in the Expanded Programme, and congratulating Rotary International on its success, under its "Polio-Plus" initiative, in fund-raising and in obtaining the personal involvement of thousands of its members in support of national immunization programmes;

6. WARNS both developing countries and outside collaborators that they will need to increase their investments in immunization if full coverage is to be achieved and sustained during the 1990s and if the targets for reduction in the number of cases of measles and neonatal tetanus and for eradication of poliomyelitis are to be achieved;

7. ENCOURAGES those concerned to make these investments, noting the special demands which the poliomyelitis eradication initiative is now making on WHO extrabudgetary resources;

8. REQUESTS the Director-General:

   (1) to pursue the actions outlined in his report pertaining to the achievement and maintenance of full immunization coverage, control of the target diseases, introduction of new or improved vaccines, and promotion of other primary health care practices and research and development;

   (2) to pursue the action outlined in resolution WHA41.28 with respect to the eradication of poliomyelitis;

   (3) to continue to seek from extrabudgetary sources the contributions required to support these activities;

   (4) to continue to keep the Health Assembly informed of the progress of the Expanded Programme, including progress in the eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000.

Thirteenth plenary meeting, 19 May 1989
A42/VR/13