

Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization¹

The Fifty-third World Health Assembly,

Noting with deep concern that about 6.8 million children under five years of age die each year from infectious and parasitic diseases, and that some two million children still die each year from diseases that can be prevented by currently available vaccines;

Noting that existing immunization programmes currently save about three million lives per year worldwide and prevent nearly 750 000 cases of blindness, paralysis and mental disability annually;

Recognizing that in some countries immunization rates are stagnating and even declining, and that great disparity exists between industrialized and developing countries in the availability of vaccines;

Recognizing that many developing countries cannot afford to pay all the costs associated with universal childhood immunization and the establishment of safe and efficient delivery systems to cover their child populations;

Acknowledging that immunization is one of the most cost-effective health interventions and that it contributes to reducing poverty,

1. ENDORSES the objectives of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) – a global network comprising governments, bilateral agencies, technical agencies, WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank, the pharmaceutical industry, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation – namely, improving access to sustainable immunization services; expanding the use of all existing safe and cost-effective vaccines; accelerating the development and introduction of new vaccines; accelerating research and development efforts for vaccines and related products specifically needed by developing countries, particularly vaccines against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; and making immunization coverage a centrepiece in the design and assessment of international development efforts, including debt relief;

2. URGES Member States:

(1) to support the work of the Alliance by calling upon leaders at the highest levels to back vaccine and immunization initiatives in their countries, and to remove obstacles that reduce access to vaccines;

¹ See document EB105/2000/REC/1, Annex 1.

- (2) to formulate common strategies to enhance immunization delivery and to stimulate introduction of vaccines;
- (3) to increase national efforts devoted to childhood immunization;
- (4) to encourage public and private agencies to meet the objectives of the Alliance;
- (5) to support and further the objectives of the Alliance through the Global Fund for Children's Vaccines and other existing mechanisms among the partners;
- (6) to support new financing mechanisms for vaccine development and immunization;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to promote the objectives of the Alliance through leadership in the field of vaccines and immunization;
- (2) to advocate increased private and public sector support for vaccine research and development and for the strengthening of immunization services in the poorest countries;
- (3) to promote and to monitor strictly the quality assurance of vaccines;
- (4) to report on progress and activities of the Alliance to the Executive Board at its 109th session in January 2002 and to the Fifty-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2002.

Eighth plenary meeting, 20 May 2000
A53/VR/8

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