

Poliomyelitis eradication

The Executive Board,

Noting the report of the Director-General on the global eradication of poliomyelitis,¹

RECOMMENDS to the Fifty-second World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Fifty-second World Health Assembly,

Reaffirming WHO's commitment to the global eradication of poliomyelitis by the end of the year 2000;

Recognizing that substantial progress has been made towards eradication of poliomyelitis, with large geographic areas of the world now free of poliomyelitis, and a fall of 85% in annually reported cases since global eradication began in 1988;

Noting that as of May 1999, poliomyelitis remains endemic in a number of countries of southern and western Asia and the African continent, some of which are either affected by conflict or constitute densely populated wild poliovirus "reservoirs";

Realizing that civil strife and funding shortfalls represent the two major obstacles to achieve poliomyelitis eradication;

Affirming that poliomyelitis eradication will have humanitarian and economic benefits for all countries,

1. URGES poliomyelitis-endemic Member States to accelerate eradication activities by conducting additional immunization rounds each year, on either a national or subnational basis; to improve the quality of national immunization days by ensuring that every child is reached; to implement house-to-house "mopping-up" campaigns; and to enhance surveillance by ensuring that all cases of acute flaccid paralysis are detected and promptly investigated;

2. URGES poliomyelitis-free Member States:

(1) to sustain high levels of immunization coverage until eradication is certified globally;

- (2) to maintain high quality surveillance for wild poliovirus importations and establish action plans for rapidly responding to such events;
3. URGES all Members States:
 - (1) to mobilize the human and financial resources necessary to accelerate eradication in poliomyelitis-endemic countries;
 - (2) to support the peace-building process by facilitating ceasefires for National Immunization Days in countries affected by conflict;
 - (3) to support the work of the poliomyelitis eradication initiative in strengthening health systems and services;
 - (4) to begin, in collaboration with WHO, the process leading to the laboratory containment of wild poliovirus;
4. REQUESTS the Director-General:
 - (1) to urge all partners to facilitate acceleration of the initiative to eradicate poliomyelitis during the critical period 1999 to 2001;
 - (2) to facilitate, when necessary, coordinated mass immunization activities in bordering areas of Member States and WHO regions;
 - (3) to collaborate with other organizations of the United Nations system and other international bodies in arranging ceasefires for poliomyelitis eradication, and facilitating eradication activities, in countries affected by conflict;
 - (4) to help mobilize the necessary financing to implement eradication activities, including establishment of an emergency fund to meet the needs of countries affected by conflict, countries classified as major wild poliovirus reservoirs, and other countries in particularly difficult circumstances, and to draw upon the strengths of the regional offices in the use of these resources;
 - (5) to collaborate with Member States in the establishment of a mechanism for overseeing the process of laboratory containment of wild poliovirus;
 - (6) to facilitate ongoing research to define the optimum strategy for eventually stopping immunization against poliomyelitis.

Ninth meeting, 29 January 1999
EB103/SR/9