

WHA29.54 The Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the Director-General's report on the smallpox eradication programme;

Noting with satisfaction that smallpox is now restricted to only a few remote villages of a single country and that interruption of smallpox transmission is believed to be imminent;

Bearing in mind the importance of completing the eradication of smallpox in the shortest possible period of time and of ensuring confidence in the achievement by using international groups of experts to confirm the eradication two years or more after the last known case;

Recognizing the need for all laboratories which retain stocks of variola virus to take maximum precautions to prevent accidental infection;

Appreciating the importance of continued surveillance and research to provide further assurance that there is no animal or other natural reservoir of the virus;

Noting that the risk of smallpox importations by persons travelling by sea or air has so diminished that no such importations have occurred during the past 17 months;

Noting also that, as supplies of vaccine now being produced are more than sufficient in quantity to meet all current needs, an accumulation by WHO of vaccine stocks for use in the event of an unforeseen emergency could be established;

1. CONGRATULATES the many countries which have made and are making such a successful and determined effort to eradicate smallpox;
2. EXTENDS special congratulations to the 15 countries of western Africa where smallpox eradication was certified on 15 April 1976 and to Bangladesh, India and Nepal, which interrupted smallpox transmission during the past year;
3. THANKS all governments, organizations and individuals who have contributed to the implementation of the programme and requests that they continue to contribute generously to the programme until global eradication can be certified;
4. ENDORSES the procedures developed by the Director-General in the use of groups of international experts in the certification of eradication and asks for the full cooperation of all countries concerned in carrying out these procedures, so that countries throughout the world may have confidence that eradication has been achieved;
5. URGES that all governments continue to conduct surveillance for smallpox-like illnesses and to inform the Organization promptly should any such cases be discovered;
6. REQUESTS all governments and laboratories to cooperate fully in preparing an international registry of laboratories retaining stocks of variola virus but, at the same time, urges all laboratories which do not require such stocks of variola virus to destroy them;
7. URGES all governments to restrict their requests for International Certificates of Smallpox Vaccination to travellers who, within the preceding 14 days, have visited a smallpox-infected country as reflected in the WHO *Weekly Epidemiological Record*;
8. REQUESTS Member countries to continue to donate vaccine to the Voluntary Fund for Health Promotion so that a reserve supply of 4 million vials of vaccine (sufficient to vaccinate 200 to 300 million persons) may be accumulated which could be made available to Member countries in the event of unforeseen emergencies;

9. REQUESTS the Director-General to obtain expert advice, through the Committee on International Surveillance of Communicable Diseases or by other means, on questions such as the need for retention of variola virus in laboratories and, if necessary, to make recommendations on the number and distribution of such laboratories and on the precise precautions which should be taken to prevent accidental infection;

10. REQUESTS further the Director-General to undertake a study of the organization of a world conference on the problems of eradicated smallpox and to report on the subject to the Executive Board and to the Thirtieth World Health Assembly.

May 1976 233, 34

EB59.R28 The Executive Board,

Having examined the report of the Director-General on the smallpox eradication programme;

Noting resolution WHA29.54;

1. EXPRESSES APPRECIATION of the intensive efforts being made by the Organization and the countries concerned to interrupt smallpox transmission at the earliest possible date and to verify and document this achievement;
2. ENDORSES the recommendation of the Committee on International Surveillance of Communicable Diseases that stocks of variola virus be retained only by WHO Collaborating Centres under conditions ensuring maximum safety;
3. URGES Member States to continue to provide maximum possible support to the programme so that it may be completed as soon as possible.

Jan. 1977 238, 20

WHA30.52 The Thirtieth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the Director-General's report on the smallpox eradication programme;

Recognizing that, while smallpox is now reported from only a single country in north-eastern Africa, continuing smallpox transmission in that area represents a considerable danger for adjacent countries owing to nomadic population movements;

Stressing the importance of establishing data in respect of previously endemic areas, for review by an independent group of experts, in order to document the absence of smallpox transmission for a period of two years or more;

Noting that 18 laboratories are currently registered as retaining stocks of variola virus or specimens from smallpox cases;

Noting also that the Organization's vaccine reserves for use in an unforeseen emergency are not yet at a level sufficient to permit the vaccination of 200 to 300 million persons as envisaged in resolution WHA29.54;

1. CONGRATULATES Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, where smallpox eradication has been certified during the last six months;
2. REQUESTS governments and laboratories to continue to cooperate in preparing the international register of laboratories retaining stocks of variola virus or specimens from smallpox cases, and to ensure that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee on International Surveillance of Communicable Diseases endorsed by the Executive Board in resolution EB59.R28, these stocks and specimens are retained only by WHO collaborating centres under conditions ensuring maximum safety;

3. REQUESTS all Member States to continue to give financial support to the smallpox eradication programme, either through the Special Account for Smallpox Eradication of the Voluntary Fund for Health Promotion or on a bilateral basis, in order that the last known smallpox foci can be eliminated as rapidly as possible;
4. REQUESTS all Member States to consider their vaccination programmes and requirements and whether any unnecessary vaccination requirements can be reduced;
5. URGES all governments to make full use of the expertise of international and national personnel with experience in smallpox surveillance and in containment measures as may be required effectively to interrupt transmission of the disease and to prepare for independent assessment in those countries where the eradication of smallpox has not yet been certified;
6. INVITES Member States to continue to donate smallpox vaccine to the Voluntary Fund for Health Promotion until reserves sufficient to vaccinate 200 to 300 million persons have been built up;
7. REQUESTS the Director-General to report to the Thirty-first World Health Assembly on the progress made in this programme during the next 12 months.

May 1977 240, 32

EB61.R10 The Executive Board,

Having examined the report of the Director-General on the smallpox eradication programme;

Noting resolution WHA30.52;

1. EXPRESSES appreciation for the intensive efforts being made by the World Health Organization and the countries concerned to interrupt smallpox transmission and verify this achievement;
2. ENDORSES the recommendations of the Consultation on Worldwide Certification of Smallpox Eradication,¹ as annexed to the report of the Director-General;
3. REQUESTS the Director-General to establish as soon as possible an International Commission for the Global Certification of Smallpox Eradication (Global Commission);
4. URGES all governments to continue full support and cooperation to this final phase of the programme, so that global eradication of smallpox can be certified by the end of 1979.

Jan. 1978 244, 7

EB63.R5 Smallpox eradication programme

The Executive Board,

Having examined the report of the Director-General on the smallpox eradication programme;

Recognizing that, while global certification is proceeding satisfactorily, certain measures must be taken by the Organization to ensure that smallpox has been permanently eradicated;

1. CONGRATULATES those countries and areas where smallpox eradication has been certified by the Global Commission;
2. COMMENDS the Director-General on establishing a Global Commission which has produced such a comprehensive review on the status of global certification;

¹ WHO Technical Report Series, No. 622, 1978.

WHA31.54 The Thirty-first World Health Assembly,

Having considered the Director-General's report on smallpox eradication;

Endorsing the Executive Board's resolution EB61.R10 on smallpox eradication;

Recognizing that for six months reported smallpox incidence throughout the world has been nil, that achievement of smallpox eradication is now imminent, and that it will constitute an unprecedented event in the history of medicine;

1. CONGRATULATES Somalia on the effective eradication campaign and adjacent countries on their intensive surveillance and maintenance of their smallpox-free status;
2. COMMENDS Bangladesh, Burma, the nine countries of central Africa (Burundi, Central African Empire, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, United Republic of Cameroon, and Zaire), and the four countries of south-east Africa (Malawi, Mozambique, United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia) where international commissions have visited and certified eradication of smallpox in 1977 and in 1978 to date;
3. REQUESTS the 31 countries where certification activities will take place in 1978 and 1979 to proceed with their planned activities, in collaboration with WHO and the Global Commission for the Certification of Smallpox Eradication so that these activities can be completed by the end of 1979;
4. REQUESTS all laboratories except WHO collaborating centres to destroy or transfer remaining stocks of variola virus to a collaborating centre;
5. REQUESTS the Director-General to establish a reward of US\$1000 for the first person who, in the period preceding final certification of global eradication, reports an active case of smallpox resulting from person-to-person transmission and confirmed by laboratory tests, in the belief that such a reward will strengthen worldwide vigilance for smallpox as well as national surveillance in priority countries;
6. REITERATES the final paragraph of the Executive Board's resolution EB61.R10, which urged all governments to continue full support and cooperation for this final phase of the programme.

May 1978 247, 39

3. ENDORSES the recommendations made by the Global Commission at its first meeting as presented by the Director-General and set out in the annex to this resolution, including the need for continuing surveillance activities as recommended by the Global Commission;
4. URGES all institutions still retaining stocks of variola virus to destroy or transfer them to WHO collaborating centres with adequate safety facilities.

Hbk Res., Vol. II (3rd ed.), 1.10.4

(Twelfth meeting, 17 January 1979)

Annex

Recommendations of the Global Commission for the
Certification of Smallpox Eradication

The recommendations made by the Global Commission for the Certification of Smallpox Eradication at its first meeting, held in Geneva from 4 to 7 December 1978, were as follows:

1. Global certification of smallpox eradication

- 1.1 Countries preparing for certification by international commissions should be encouraged to proceed with the timely preparation of the necessary documentation.
- 1.2 WHO should proceed with the collection and review of the additional information sought from China, Democratic Kampuchea, Iraq, Madagascar and South Africa. The requirements for certification are described in the comments about each of these countries. Global Commission members should be kept informed of further developments.
- 1.3 All countries which have not yet submitted formal declarations of freedom from smallpox should be requested to do so as promptly as possible.

2. The Birmingham smallpox outbreak

- 2.1 An ad hoc committee should be established to review the report of the governmental inquiry into this outbreak and report to the Global Commission at its next meeting.

3. Orthopoxviruses

- 3.1 WHO should support studies applying the new techniques of DNA analysis to variola virus and related orthopoxviruses.
- 3.2 A study group on orthopoxviruses should be appointed by WHO, and this group should meet periodically.
- 3.3 White pock clones (reported as derived from monkeypox virus) should be further characterized by polypeptide and DNA analysis and attempts should be made to confirm these findings in other centres as soon as possible, under WHO's coordination.
- 3.4 The proposed epidemiological study in Zaire, a project in which WHO is cooperating, and which is designed to investigate the natural history of monkeypox and whitepox viruses, was endorsed.
- 3.5 Selected Member States and research institutions should be encouraged to lend their full support to the recommendations concerning orthopoxviruses.

4. Retention of stocks of variola virus and safety in laboratories holding them

- 4.1 WHO should continue its efforts to reduce the number of laboratories retaining stocks of variola virus with the objective that by 1980 not more than four laboratories should retain stocks. These laboratories should be WHO collaborating centres with maximum containment facilities. The full collaboration of the national health administrations concerned is needed for this action.