

**WHA28.52      Smallpox eradication programme**

The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly,

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

Noting with satisfaction the considerable successes achieved in carrying out the programme, as witnessed by the sharp reduction in the number of cases of smallpox in countries where it is endemic;

Considering that the progress made and the unflagging efforts and care of WHO and its Member States in carrying out this programme inspire confidence that smallpox eradication will soon be achieved throughout the world;

Bearing in mind that the successful completion of this programme will be the first example of the eradication of a disease by man as a result of broad international cooperation and the collective efforts of WHO, its Member States and various international governmental and nongovernmental organizations;

Recognizing that the success of the programme has been dependent on its profoundly scientific basis, on unceasing research and practical investigations throughout the course of its implementation, on making correct allowances for the special features of the causal agent of smallpox and the nature of immunity to it, on the considerable improvements achieved in the last few years in the quality and effectiveness of the smallpox vaccine, on the development and wide practical introduction of new methods of mass vaccination and on constant improvements in systems for case-finding and for the recording of vaccinations;

Noting also that the entry of the smallpox eradication programme into its final stage has been the result of lengthy and heroic efforts by numerous countries, international organizations, establishments, physicians and field workers, both in the period up till the 1950s, when national campaigns were developing and when the prerequisite conditions were being created for smallpox control on an international scale, and after the proclamation and development of an international smallpox eradication campaign in accordance with resolution WHA11.54 in 1958 and the intensification of the programme from 1967 onwards in accordance with resolution WHA19.16; and

Expressing confidence that with continued effort the countries so near the end will achieve eradication,

1. CONGRATULATES the countries which, since the inception of the global programme, have made the outstanding achievement of eradicating smallpox from within their borders;
2. THANKS all governments, organizations and individuals who have contributed to the implementation of the programme and asks them to continue to increase their efforts for smallpox eradication in this concluding stage of the programme;
3. EMPHASIZES the need to increase the vigilance and sense of responsibility in all regions of the world, with a view to preventing possible outbreaks of smallpox so as not to let slip the favourable situation for the successful conclusion of the programme that now exists, by continuing active epidemiological surveillance and the corresponding vaccination programmes, particularly for newborn children;
4. DEEMS it necessary to summarize and describe in a major publication the experience of smallpox eradication throughout the world, for which purpose the help should be enlisted of scientific experts and practical workers who have taken part in carrying out the programme, having first analysed with great care and thus preserved for mankind the unique historical experience of the eradication of one of the most dangerous communicable diseases as a result of effective international cooperation, experience which will doubtless be used in programmes for the control of other communicable diseases;
5. REQUESTS the Director-General:
  - (1) to draw up recommendations regarding those further activities of the Organization and its Member States that will be needed to maintain smallpox eradication throughout the world, including possible changes in the International Health Regulations;
  - (2) to ensure the wider development of research on methods of differentiating viruses of the poxvirus group and determining the special features of their epidemiology, paying particular attention to variola-like viruses (white strains) isolated from monkeys and to other monkey viruses; and
  - (3) to submit a report on further developments in this sphere to the Executive Board at one of its sessions or to a World Health Assembly.