

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

WHO Conference Hall, Manila
Thursday, 24 August 1978 at 8.30 a.m.

CHAIRMAN: Dr S. Foliaki (Tonga)

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1. STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN OFFICIAL RELATIONS WITH WHO: Item 20 of the Agenda

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN statements were presented as follows:

1.1 Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Mr DEVARAJAN conveyed to the Committee the greetings of the UNDP Administrator, Mr Bradford Morse, and Mr Andrew Joseph, Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Pacific.

The part played in the WHO technical cooperation programme by UNDP contributions was rather small compared with expenditure from the regular budget, a fact largely due to the attitude of governments, who tended to be more anxious to increase the gross national product than the life expectancy of their people.

All of them in the UNDP and UNFPA serving the Western Pacific Region had been saddened by the news of the forthcoming retirement of Dr Dy, who had always given his unstinting cooperation to both bodies and had always shown sympathy and understanding on the occasions when their limited resources made it impossible for them to meet requests.

He was certain that Dr Dy had derived great satisfaction from his unflagging efforts to ensure that the human right to health was enjoyed by all. They in their turn had derived equal satisfaction from his wide guidance and his sincere sense of partnership in the task of economic and social development.

On behalf of Mr Bradford Morse, the Administrator of UNDP, Mr Rafael Salas, Executive Director of UNFPA, Mr Andrew Joseph, Assistant Administrator for Asia and the Pacific, all his colleagues in the Region and himself, he wished to place on record their appreciation for the cooperation and understanding they had unfailingly received from Dr Dy during the past twelve years and to wish him an equally fruitful retirement.

1.2 Representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Dr WAH WONG expressed support for the Director-General's call to everyone to join in the "political struggle for health". One way of contributing was through primary health care, for which plans could be developed and implemented only at the national level. UNICEF pledged its full support to the formulation of such plans in the developing countries, since a major target group would be children and mothers. He drew attention to UNICEF's involvement in health projects in the Philippines, Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific, and expressed appreciation to the Regional Director and his staff for their unflinching support to UNICEF. WHO and UNICEF should jointly

seek ways of providing effective cooperation in primary health care (PHC) programmes, as a follow-up to several national PHC workshops held with WHO/UNICEF assistance. Dr Wah Wong congratulated the Regional Director on his excellent report to the International Conference on Primary Health Care; a very frank and outspoken statement in keeping with the new political spirit of WHO. One element of PHC of particular interest to UNICEF was community involvement and participation, for experience had shown that a community-based approach was essential if a programme was to produce a lasting effect. He recommended the study on "Community involvement in primary health care" submitted to the UNICEF-WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy in 1977.

1979 was to be the International Year of the Child, and UNICEF had been designated as "lead agency" for the year within the United Nations system. The focus would be on national activities to improve the conditions of children everywhere, and the large amount of preparatory work already carried out in many countries was most gratifying. He drew attention to a regional consultation aimed at strengthening and supporting preparatory activities for the International Year of the Child, organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and to be held in Manila from 25 November to 3 December 1978.

Finally, UNICEF renewed its pledge to be an active partner with WHO in the pursuit of a better life for all, with special emphasis on needy children and mothers.

1.3 Representative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Mr UNNI-NAYAR said that cooperation between WHO and the ILO was as old as WHO itself.

Occupational diseases and industrial accidents took a huge toll in death, disablement and illness every year. Today over 600 000 chemicals were in use in industry alone and many more were being introduced every day, often without any accurate assessment of the harm they did to those who worked with them.

A number of ILO conventions and recommendations had been adopted with a view to protecting the living and working conditions of people working in various industries and some types of rural occupation. ILO's activities for occupational health and improved working conditions had recently been given new impetus by the adoption of a new international programme (PIACT), whose main objectives were further to intensify action for the protection of workers' safety and health, to promote enjoyment of leisure activities and to seek ways and means of making work more interesting. The relative importance attached to each of these activities naturally varied with the socioeconomic conditions prevailing in the country concerned.

The figures for industrial injuries in the Philippines in 1977 left little room for complacency and occupational health and safety was considered to be one of its priority tasks by the Philippine Ministry of Labour. It was intended to establish an Institute of Occupational Health and Safety and both ILO and WHO could help in that task once the Ministries of Labour and Health had reached agreement on ways and means.

Many ILO publications had been placed on display outside the Conference Hall that might be of interest to Representatives and copies could be obtained from the ILO office in Bangkok or Headquarters in Geneva.

He thanked the Committee for its attention.

1.4 Representative of the South Pacific Commission (SPC)

Dr KUBERSKI said that the purpose of the SPC was to assist the governments of the islands in the South Pacific in dealing with their unique economic, social and health problems. Health was an integral part of the Commission's programme and every effort was made to coordinate its health activities with WHO. The Commission had played a valuable role in recent years by successfully collaborating with WHO in numerous ventures designed to improve the health of Pacific islanders.

Two particularly successful meetings had been jointly sponsored by SPC and WHO in the past year, one on cholera in the South Pacific, the other on diabetes. The closer cooperation between the two bodies was demonstrated by the SPC's representation at the Regional Committee session and by the proposed visit to the Commission early next year of Dr John Hirshman, the WHO Regional Office's Director of Programme Management, to develop closer lines of communication and collaborative projects.

The slightly greater flexibility provided by the fact that its work programme and budget were reviewed annually had enabled the SPC to develop small and efficient programmes in such areas of health as respiratory and sexually transmitted diseases, areas covered by the WHO budget proposals for 1980.

Further cooperation would be greatly welcomed by the SPC. Its role would perhaps be to continue to develop small government-approved programmes, potentially worthy of expansion; such expansion could then be carried out by WHO, with the considerable resources it had at its command.

The Commission looked forward to a strengthening of SPC/WHO relationship.

1.5 Non-governmental organizations

Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations made statements on the work of their organizations in collaboration with WHO, aimed at promoting and enhancing the health of the people:

World Council for the Welfare of the Blind
International Dental Federation
Christian Medical Commission
The World Medical Association, Inc.
Medical Women's International Association
World Federation for Mental Health
International Council of Nurses
Permanent Commission and International Association on Occupational Health

World Federation of Occupational Therapists
International Federation of Ophthalmological Societies
International Council of Societies of Pathology
International Paediatric Association
World Federation of Public Health Associations
League of Red Cross Societies
Rehabilitation International
International Federation of Sports Medicine
World Veterans Federation

2. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

The Committee considered the following draft resolutions:

2.1 Budget performance 1977 - Direct services to governments (Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 4)

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted without comment
(see resolution WPR/RC29.R6).

2.2 Proposed programme budget estimates for the biennium 1980-1981 (Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 5)

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted without comment
(see resolution WPR/RC29.R7).

2.3 Membership of the Sub-Committee on the General Programme of Work (Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 6)

In reply to a question from Dr FISCHER (United States of America), the REGIONAL DIRECTOR said that the extension of the Sub-Committee's terms of reference would be dealt with in a separate resolution.

To meet the request of Dr CHEW (Singapore) for a clearer wording of the preambular paragraph, the REGIONAL DIRECTOR proposed replacement of the portion "Notwithstanding resolution WPR/RC28.R20, operative paragraphs of which related" by "Notwithstanding resolution WPR/RC28.R20, which contained operative paragraphs relating".

Decision: The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted
(see resolution WPR/RC29.R8).

2.4 Interpretation of the Host Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the World Health Organization (Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 7)

The REGIONAL DIRECTOR assured Dr FISCHER (United States of America) that it was both proper and usual for the Regional Committee to request a Government to do something.

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted without further comment (see resolution WPR/RC29.R9).

2.5 WHO's role in the development and coordination of biomedical research: greater involvement of the Regions in research
(Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 8)

Dr TRAVERS (Australia) proposed replacing the words "a pace" in operative paragraph two (4) by the word "satisfactorily".

Dr FISCHER (United States of America) proposed the substitution of the word "involving" for the words "and with" in the fourth line of operative paragraph two (1).

Decision: The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted
(see resolution WPR/RC29.R10).

2.6 Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases: Joint Coordinating Board: selection of government representatives
(Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 9)

Decision: The draft resolution was adopted without comment
(see resolution WPR/RC29.R11).

2.7 Regional Coordinating Group on the Mental Health Programme
(Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 10)

Dr FISCHER (United States of America) proposed the amendment of "level" to "levels" in the last preambular paragraph and the insertion, before the words "Member States" in the last line of operative paragraph two, of the words "the global coordinating group as well as with".

Decision: The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted
(see resolution WPR/RC29.R12).

2.8 Status of the antimalaria programme
(Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 11)

Dr NICHOLSON (United Kingdom) suggested the addition to operative paragraph 3 of a subparagraph 3(4) requesting the Regional Director to report on the situation at the next session of the Regional Committee.

Decision: The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted
(see resolution WPR/RC29.R13).

2.9 Workers' health programme
(Document WPR/RC29/Conf. Paper No. 12)

Dr TRAVERS (Australia) suggested the addition to operative paragraph five of a subparagraph requesting the Regional Director to urge a greater degree of cooperation between government ministries.

At the suggestion of Dr HIRSHMAN (Director, Programme Management), it was agreed instead to add a subparagraph requesting the Regional Director to intensify the World Health Organization's efforts in the Western Pacific Region towards cooperation in promoting the coordination of occupational health services between ministries concerned and national health programmes.

Decision: The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted (see resolution WPR/RC29.R14).

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.