



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



## 128th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Washington, D.C., USA, 25-29 June 2001*

---

*Provisional Agenda Item 4.4*

CE128/11 (Eng.)

18 May 2001

ORIGINAL: SPANISH

### **REPORT ON THE XII INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE**

The XII Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA XII) was held in the Americas Room at the Renaissance Hotel, in São Paulo, Brazil, from 2 to 4 May 2001. It was convened by the Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in compliance with Resolution CD17.R19, adopted by 17th Directing Council of PAHO, and Resolution RIMSA11.R3, adopted by the XI Inter-American Meeting on Animal Health at the Ministerial Level (XI RIMSA), held at PAHO Headquarters in 1999. There, the original name of the Meeting was changed to Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture, retaining the acronym RIMSA.

RIMSA XII was an historical landmark. It was the first time that the Ministers of Agriculture and Health participated in the Meeting, and there was a special session with the President of Brazil, Dr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, to mark the occasion. The discussions of the agenda items and the 10 resolutions that were adopted demonstrated the importance of this Meeting, which operationalizes the interaction between health and agriculture at the highest political level and has made it possible to develop priority strategic plans.

The Meeting unanimously elected the following Officers: President, Mr. Marcus Vinicius Pratini de Moraes, Minister of State for Agriculture and Supply of Brazil; Vice Presidents, Dr. Javier Usabiaga Arroyo, Secretary of Agriculture and Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries, and Food of Mexico; and Dr. Michelle Bachelet, Minister of Health of Chile; and Rapporteur, the Hon. John Toussaint, Minister of Health of Dominica.

The President of the Meeting, Mr. Marcus Vinicius de Moraes, presided over the inaugural session, and the following individuals took the floor to welcome the participants: Dr. João Carlos de Souza Meirelles, Secretary of Agriculture and Supply of the State of São Paulo, on behalf of the State of São Paulo; Dr. George A. O. Alleyne, on behalf of PAHO; and Mr. de Moraes, on behalf of the Government of Brazil. Dr. José Serra, Minister of Health of Brazil, offered a presentation on the world food trade and its importance for the economy and public health.

The special closing session was presided over by Dr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, who stressed the importance of the Meeting for strengthening programs for foot-and-mouth disease eradication, zoonosis control, and food safety. Also present was Dr. Geraldo Alckmin, Governor of the State of São Paulo.

Delegates from 35 Member States attended the Meeting, among them 18 Ministers and 3 Vice Ministers of Agriculture; 17 Ministers and 2 Vice Ministers of Health, and 2 ambassadors as heads of delegation. Representatives of technical cooperation, financing, and private sector agencies participated as observers—among the latter, associations of livestock producers and consumers, the food industry, nongovernmental organizations, and universities. Observers from the Governments of Aruba and the British Virgin Islands also attended.

Prior to the Meeting, the VIII Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-mouth Disease (VIII COHEFA) was held.

The objective of RIMS A XII was to discuss matters of mutual interest for the health and agriculture sectors and to analyze compliance with both the strategic and programmatic orientations of PAHO in veterinary public health and the plans of action of its specialized centers: the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) and the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ) for the biennium 2002-2003.

Based on the strategic and programmatic orientations for the quadrennium 1999-2002, two panels were held for the consideration of the Meeting: the first on community participation in food protection, and the second on zoonosis of importance for the economy and public health, which emphasized the current bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) situation and the recommendations of the consultation of PAHO experts on BSE held by PAHO in Montevideo, Uruguay. Special topics discussed at the Meeting were the implications of reforms in the livestock sector for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease and other aspects of animal health, productive municipalities, and food security at the local level.

The broad participation of the Ministers of Health and Agriculture, the discussions of the items presented, and the 10 resolutions that were approved demonstrated the importance of this Meeting, which operationalizes the interaction between health and agriculture at the highest political level and has made it possible to develop priority regional plans. To this end, the delegates recommended that the Director continue to convene this Meeting every two years, pursuant to the existing mandates. The delegates expressed their approval and congratulated PAHO on the approach to veterinary public health adapted to local conditions that has been employed in the countries with PAHO cooperation. This approach has led to significant progress by the regional strategic plans—approved by RIMSA—for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, the elimination of zoonoses such as human rabies transmitted by dogs, the sanitary protection of food, the control and elimination of tuberculosis and brucellosis, and the elimination of hydatidosis. In this regard, the delegates issued recommendations that the countries continue to consolidate this approach and implement the strategic plans, and that the Director continue to provide the necessary technical cooperation.

The Plans of Action for 2002-2003 of PANAFTOSA and INPPAZ were unanimously approved, and the Meeting recommended the development and presentation of efficiency and impact indicators for the technical cooperation. In light of the reemergence of foot-and-mouth disease in countries formerly free of this disease in the Southern Cone, the need to strengthen preventive measures and emergency plans was emphasized. In particular, the Meeting ratified the recommendations of the South American Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COSALFA) and COHEFA that PANAFTOSA be responsible for evaluating and auditing the national programs.

The creation of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA), was also submitted for consideration by the Meeting, pursuant to the recommendations of the II Scientific and Technical Committee of INPPAZ, Resolution RIMSA11.R5, and Resolution CD42.R3, which recommended that the Director of PAHO explore the need for a regional commission on food safety to address matters related to policies in this area. The Meeting approved the creation of the Commission and requested that a working group present observations on the framework and terms of reference for COPAIA, to be adopted at future meeting of the Commission.

In regard to zoonoses, the Meeting recommended the implementation of surveillance and monitoring systems for emerging zoonoses (exotic diseases) in the Region and the implementation of subregional strategies and plans for the control and elimination of brucellosis. Specifically, it adopted a resolution to keep the Americas free of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), pursuant to the recommendations of the

PAHO/WHO consultation held in Montevideo, and the harmonization of the prevention policies and standards of the International Zoosanitary Code of the International Office of Epizootics (IOE).

Finally, gratitude was expressed to the Organization for providing the backing, transparency, and facilities to meet technical cooperation needs for the eradication of diseases that affect human and animal health and the production and marketing of food.

The members of the Executive Committee are requested to analyze the attached report and offer whatever comments they deem pertinent.

Annex: Final Report of RIMSA. XII



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



## **XII INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE**

*São Paulo, Brazil, 2-4 May 2001*

---

CE128/11 (Eng.)  
Annex

RIMSA12/FR (Eng.)  
4 May 2001  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

### **FINAL REPORT**

## CONTENTS

|   | <i>Page</i> |
|---|-------------|
| Officers .....  | 3           |
| Participants  |             |
| Member and Participating States and Associate Members .....   | 3           |
| Observers.....  | 4           |
| Agenda and Program of Sessions.....   | 4           |
| Sessions  |             |
| Inaugural Session .....   | 4           |
| First Session .....   | 5           |
| Second Session.....   | 6           |
| Third Session.....  | 7           |
| Fourth Session.....   | 8           |
| Special Session with the President of Brazil .....  | 9           |
| Resolutions   |             |
| RIMSA12.R1: Intersectoral Coordination between Health and Agriculture<br>for the Development of Veterinary Public Health Programs .....                   | 10          |
| RIMSA12.R2: Proposed Plan of Action of the Pan American Institute<br>for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ), 2002-2003 .....                           | 11          |
| RIMSA12.R3: Creation of the Pan American Commission for<br>Food Safety (COPAIA).....  | 12          |
| RIMSA12.R4: Proposed Plan of Action of the Pan American Foot-and-<br>Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), 2002-2003 .....                                    | 14          |
| RIMSA12.R5: VIII Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the<br>Eradication of Foot-And-Mouth Disease (COHEFA VIII) .....                                | 15          |
| RIMSA12.R6: VIII Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control<br>Programs in Latin America (REDIPRA).....  | 18          |
| RIMSA12.R7: Zoonoses.....   | 19          |
| RIMSA12.R8: Keeping the Americas Free of Bovine Spongiform<br>Encephalopathy (BSE) .....  | 21          |
| RIMSA12.R9: Expression of Appreciation to the Government of the<br>Federative Republic of Brazil and to the Government<br>of the State of São Paulo ..... | 22          |
| RIMSA12.R10: Expression of Appreciation to the Pan American Health<br>Organization .....  | 23          |

## FINAL REPORT

The Twelfth Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA 12) was held in the Americas Room at the Renaissance São Paulo Hotel in São Paulo, Brazil, from 2 to 4 May 2001, as convened by the Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in compliance with Resolution CD17.R19, adopted by the 17th Directing Council of PAHO, and Resolution RIMSA11.R3, adopted by the Eleventh Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level on Animal Health (RIMSA 11), that changed the name of this meeting to Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture, maintaining the acronym "RIMSA."

### Officers

The officers for the Meeting, elected unanimously during the preliminary session, were as follows:

|                         |          |  |
|-------------------------|----------|--|
| <i>President:</i>       | Brazil   | Mr. Marcus Vinicius Pratini de Moraes, Minister of Agriculture |
| <i>Vice Presidents:</i> | Mexico   | Dr. Javier Usabiaga Arroyo, Secretary of Agriculture           |
|                         | Chile    | Dr. Michelle Bachelet, Minister of Health                      |
| <i>Rapporteur:</i>      | Dominica | Hon. John Toussaint, Minister of Health                        |

Dr. George A. O. Alleyne, Director of PAHO, served as Secretary ex officio of RIMSA 12, and Dr. Primo Arámbulo III, Coordinator of the Program on Veterinary Public Health of PAHO, as Technical Secretary.

### Participants

#### *Member and Participating States and Associate Members*

The following Member and Participating States and Associate Members were represented at the Meeting: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

### ***Observers***

Present as observers were representatives of the Governments of Aruba and the British Virgin Islands, and the following agencies and organizations: Caribbean Community, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), International Office of Epizootics (OIE), Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Organismo Internacional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (OIRSA), World Veterinary Association, Consumers International, AICAR (Venezuela), Asociación Boliviana de Criadores de Cebú, Asociación de Empacadores de Carne (Honduras), Asociación de Productores de Ganado de Leche (Panamá), Asociación Nacional de Ganaderos (Panama), Asociación Rural (Paraguay), Central Azucarero La Victoria (Panama), Comisión Nacional de Erradicación de la Fiebre Aftosa (Ecuador), Comunidad Andina, Confederación Nacional Ganadera (Mexico), Consumer Protection Association (Trinidad and Tobago), Corporación de Fomento Ganadero (Costa Rica), Cornell University, CESAVEG (Mexico), CONGABOL (Bolivia), COPAL (Argentina), Federación de Ganaderos (Santa Cruz), Federación de Ganaderos (Colombia), Federación de Ganaderos (Guatemala), Federación de Ganaderos (Venezuela), George Washington University, Seafood Processors and Trawler Owners Association (Guyana), Productora Nacional de Biológicos Veterinarios (Mexico), International Association of Food Protection, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Tribunales Ecuatorianas de Consumidores, Tuskegee University, and US Pharmacoepia.

### **Agenda and Program of Sessions**

The Agenda and Program of Sessions (Documents RIMSA12/1, Rev. 1, and RIMSA12/WP/1) were approved without modification.

### **Sessions**

An inaugural session, four plenary sessions, and a special session with the President of Brazil were held.

### ***Inaugural Session***

The President of the Meeting, Mr. Marcus Vinicius Pratini de Moraes, declared RIMSA 12 officially open and yielded the floor to Dr. João Carlos de Souza Meirelles (Secretary of Agriculture and Food Supply, state of São Paulo, Brazil), who welcomed the participants on behalf of the host state. Dr. George A. O. Alleyne, Director of PAHO, then welcomed the participants on behalf of PAHO, Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (WHO). Outlining the objectives and expected results of

the Meeting, he pointed out that not only would it deal with important issues relating to agriculture and animal health, but also with the health and well-being of the population. He stressed that this Meeting was historic for having both Ministers of Agriculture and Health of the Member States participating.

Mr. Marcus Vinicius Pratini de Moraes (Minister of Agriculture, Brazil) then addressed the assembly on behalf of the Government of Brazil, highlighting the need for the countries of the Region to make a political commitment to support the foot-and-mouth disease, zoonoses, and food safety programs. Ambassador Celso Lafer (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Brazil) reiterated that his government was pleased to be hosting a meeting of such importance.

Dr. José Serra (Minister of Health, Brazil) noted that the intensification of production and marketing of agricultural products carried significant health risks, which must be addressed by the health and agricultural sectors in a coordinated manner within the framework of the international agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO). He emphasized, however, that there was a clear positive relationship between increased international trade in food products and the socioeconomic development of countries.

### ***First Session***

During the first session, Dr. Primo Arámbulo III (Coordinator, Program on Veterinary Public Health, PAHO) presented the report of the Program on Veterinary Public Health on Compliance with the Strategic and Programmatic Orientations of the Pan American Health Organization, 1999-2000 (Document RIMSA12/3), emphasizing the great strides made by the countries in the control and eradication of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and other zoonoses and in the monitoring of food safety, thanks to the development of a veterinary public health approach in the Region based on the local needs of each country. In the discussion of Dr. Arámbulo's presentation, a number of delegations commended PAHO on the quality of its technical cooperation in the area of veterinary public health. It was suggested that future evaluations of that cooperation should include measurable progress indicators adapted to the specific conditions in different regions and countries. Resolution RIMSA12.R1 was adopted on this item.

Also during the first session, Dr. Claudio Almeida (Director, Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ)) outlined the proposed plan of action for INPPAZ during 2002-2003 (Document RIMSA12/4). He described the lines of action and strategies to be applied under the Strategic Plan on Food Safety, which the countries were implementing with PAHO technical cooperation. In the ensuing discussion, delegates expressed support for the proposed plan of action and praised INPPAZ for its cooperation with the countries with regard to food safety. It was

suggested that the Institute should step up its activities in the Caribbean countries. The importance of collaboration between countries was also underscored. The delegates adopted Resolution RIMSA12.R2, recommending that the technical cooperation program for INPPAZ for the period 2002-2003, as proposed in the plan of action, be approved.

### ***Second Session***

The first part of the second session was devoted to a panel on community participation in food protection. Presentations were made on the following topics: Community Participation in the Development of Healthy Markets, by Dr. Eduardo Pretell Zárate (Minister of Health, Peru); Community Participation in Food Protection in the Tourism Industry, by the Hon. Israel A. Posner (Minister of Public Health and Social and Cultural Affairs, Aruba); Community Participation in the Production of Safe Fruits and Vegetables, by Mr. Rolando Escoto Marroquín (Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food, Guatemala); and the Role of Communities in Food Protection, by Dr. José Vargas Niello, Director of Consumers International (Documents RIMSA12/7-10).

During the discussion, the relationship between food safety and tourism was highlighted, and the importance of community participation in food protection activities was stressed. It was also emphasized that the same safety and quality standards applied to export products should apply to foods sold on domestic markets. In addition, the issues of genetic modification of foods and the use of hormones, antibiotics, and pesticides in agricultural production were discussed. In relation to the former, it was suggested that a uniform protocol should be developed to assess the risks associated with transgenic foods.

Next, a proposal for the creation of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA) was presented by Dr. João Carlos de Souza Meirelles (Secretary of Agriculture and Food Supply of the state of São Paulo, Brazil). There was consensus that the commission should be established. However, it was suggested that the terms of reference should be reexamined with an eye to avoiding duplication of functions between this new body and other existing agencies and organizations. At the request of the Delegation of the United States of America, a special session was held to discuss various issues relating to the Commission's scope, format, and terms of reference and it was decided that a working group should be formed to revise the terms of reference, incorporating the suggestions and proposals made by the various delegations. They will then be submitted for consideration by the members of COPAIA. The outcome of the discussions on this item are reflected in Resolution RIMSA12.R3.

At the end of the second session the Secretaries of Agriculture and Health of the State of São Paulo signed an agreement with the Director of the Pan American Health

Organization whereby they committed to provide financial support for the functioning of the Commission.

### ***Third Session***

The third session began with the presentation of the proposed plan of action for the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), 2002-2003, by Dr. Eduardo Correa (Director, PANAFTOSA), who summarized the progress made in the implementation of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease and discussed the emergency in several countries of the Region and the lines of action and objectives for the next biennium. In the discussion of this item, support was expressed for the new auditing function assigned to PANAFTOSA by the South American Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COSALFA), and it was proposed that the Center should coordinate a study of the current situation of the disease in the Southern Cone. It was also requested that PANAFTOSA extend its cooperation in the area of rabies to include bat-transmitted rabies. As in the case of the plan of action for INPPAZ, it was suggested that indicators should be developed to evaluate the achievement of the expected results.

The Inter-American Meeting adopted Resolution RIMSA12.R4, recommending to the Governing Bodies of PAHO that the plan of action for technical cooperation of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center in 2002-2003 be adopted.

Next, the report of the VIII Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (Document RIMSA12/12) and the resolution adopted by the Committee were presented by Mr. Pedro Adán Gordón (Panama, Vice President of the Committee's VIII Meeting). That resolution was endorsed and adopted, with one slight change, by the Inter-American Meeting (Resolution RIMSA12.R5). Dr. Alleyne congratulated the representatives of the producers for their active participation in the eradication of food-and-mouth disease, and exhorted them to continue playing a more active role in the financing of activities. In addition, the Delegations of Guyana and Jamaica reported that their countries had developed contingency plans for dealing with health emergencies caused by outbreaks of FMD and other animal diseases and offered to share their experience with other countries.

The delegates then heard a presentation by Mr. Agustín Espinosa (Ambassador of Uruguay in Brazil) on the situation of foot-and-mouth disease in his country. Ambassador Espinosa spoke in place of Dr. Gonzalo González (Minister of Agriculture, Uruguay), who was to have given the presentation on Implications of Reforms in the Livestock Sector for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease and for Other Aspects of Animal Health (Document RIMSA12/13), but was unable to attend owing to the sanitary

emergency in his country. Mr. Espinosa updated the delegates on the current status of the disease situation in Uruguay and the measures put in place to control it, emphasizing the timeliness and transparency with which the Uruguayan government had reported the first focus of infection detected. He thanked the Governments of Argentina and Brazil for their collaboration in providing FMD vaccine, and he stressed the importance of PANAFTOSA's regional coordination role.

The Report of the VIII Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in Latin America Document RIMSA12/14) was presented by Dr. Ana María Navarro (Director, National Zoonosis Program, Peru). In the discussion following the presentation, several delegates emphasized the growing importance of rabies transmitted by vampire bats and requested that PAHO strengthen its technical cooperation in that regard. Given the implications of bat-transmitted rabies for livestock production, it was suggested that the agricultural sector should participate in future meetings of the directors of rabies control programs. The Inter-American Meeting adopted Resolution RIMSA12.R6 on this item.

The last topic considered during the third session was Productive Municipalities and Food Security at the Local Level (Document RIMSA12/19). The presentation on this item was made by Dr. Emerio Serrano Ramírez (Ministry of Agriculture, Cuba), who described the Productive Municipalities Movement, launched in livestock production areas of his country with the collaboration of PAHO. The movement was considered a good model for promoting both food security and food safety. The value of its education and community components was also highlighted.

#### ***Fourth Session***

The fourth session of RIMSA 12 was devoted to a panel on zoonoses of importance for the economy and public health, which included the following presentations: Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis: Control or Elimination? by Dr. Javier Usabiaga Arroyo (Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries, and Food, Mexico); Outlook for the Elimination of Hydatidosis in the Southern Cone, by Dr. Eduardo Touyá (Ministry of Public Health, Uruguay); Current Situation of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), by Dr. Bernard Vallat (Director General, International Office of Epizootics); and Impact of Emerging Zoonoses on Human and Animal Health, by Dr. Julio R. Alfred Cassab (Director General of Health of Bolivia) (Documents RIMSA12/15-18).

During the discussion, delegates stressed the importance of maintaining continuity in the effort to eliminate brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis, especially in the final phase when the economic returns would diminish. Epidemiological surveillance, intersectoral

action, and certification were also considered crucial. Dr. Vallat described the epidemiological categories of countries and outlined the criteria by which the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) determines the epidemiological classification of a country. With regard to bovine spongiform encephalopathy, he pointed out that the issue is complex and that there continue to be a number of scientific doubts regarding the disease. The Delegate of Colombia summarized the report of a meeting of experts on BSE convened by the Director of PAHO and held in Montevideo Uruguay, 9-11 April 2001. Various delegations expressed their support for the recommendations emanating from that meeting, the aim of which was to ensure that the Americas remain free from BSE.

The Inter-American Meeting adopted two resolutions in relation to this item: RIMSA12.R7 and RIMSA12.R8.

During the fourth session, an agreement was signed by the Ministers of Agriculture of Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, the Vice Minister of Agriculture of Chile, the Secretary of Agriculture of Argentina, and a representative of the Minister of Agriculture of Bolivia to develop a joint action plan, coordinated by PANAFTOSA, to eradicate foot-and-mouth disease from the Southern Cone. The terms of reference of the agreement include transparency of information, joint strategies, strengthening of PANAFTOSA, scientific-technical exchange, promotion of markets, and information on public health aspects of foot-and-mouth disease.

### ***Special Session with the President of Brazil***

This session was headed by Dr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil. The Minister of Agriculture of Brazil and the Ambassador of Brazil to the Organization of American States also participated. Following addresses by Dr. Alleyne and Dr. Geraldo Alckmin (Governor, state of São Paulo), President Cardoso addressed RIMSA 12. He highlighted the importance of this meeting to strengthening of the programs for the control of foot-and-mouth disease, zoonoses, and food safety. He referred to the creation of COPAIA and declared RIMSA 12 officially closed.

### **Resolutions**

During RIMSA 12 the delegates adopted the following 10 resolutions:

***RIMSA12.R1: Intersectoral Coordination between Health and Agriculture for the Development of Veterinary Public Health Programs***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Taking into account the progress made by the countries of the Region in the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, control of zoonoses, and food safety with technical cooperation from the Pan American Health Organization;

Considering that RIMSA has been established as the intersectoral forum at the highest political level for instituting, orienting, monitoring, and incorporating sanitary measures into the regional plans for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease and other zoonoses and the monitoring of food safety;

Mindful of the need to orient the veterinary public health and animal health infrastructure in the countries toward a modern approach that covers the chain of food production from the farm to the table, the consolidation of which requires coordination between the public and private sectors;

Cognizant of the broad response to the call issued by the Director of PAHO to the ministers of health and agriculture of the Member States to participate together for the first time at RIMSA, which demonstrates the spirit of Pan-Americanism that exists in the Region;

Considering the recommendations of the various world forums concerning the food trade that acknowledge the need to strengthen intersectoral and inter-country coordination, and their request that the international organizations expand technical cooperation in veterinary public health to developing countries; and

Aware that the production of safe food for domestic consumption and export contributes to the well-being of the population and to the equitable social and economic development of the countries,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge the Governments to:
  - (a) set up mechanisms for intersectoral coordination between health and agriculture, with producer and consumer participation, aimed at strengthening the organization and execution of veterinary public health programs;

- (b) strengthen the infrastructure of the veterinary public health and animal health programs to facilitate achievement of the agreed-upon objectives;
  - (c) utilize intersectoral coordination methods to establish policies and incorporate standards for the sanitary inspection, quality control, and safety of food at the national, subregional, and regional levels.
2. To request the Director of PAHO to:
- (a) strengthen intersectoral coordination by convening RIMSA every two years, pursuant to the recommendation issued in compliance with Resolution CD17.R19 of the Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (1967), and Resolution RIMSA11.R3 (1999);
  - (b) continue to provide technical cooperation to the countries through the Program on Veterinary Public Health and its specialized centers, PANAFTOSA and INPPAZ;
  - (c) consolidate the control and eradication objectives and goals of the regional foot-and-mouth disease, zoonoses, and food safety plans, in compliance with the strategic and programmatic orientations of PAHO.

*(Third session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R2: Proposed Plan of Action of the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ), 2002-2003***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Having seen the Report of the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPPAZ) (Document RIMSA12/4);

Taking into account Resolution CD42.R3 of the Directing Council of PAHO adopting the strategic plan on food protection;

Recognizing that the technical cooperation activities and Plan of Action presented by INPPAZ respond to the current problems in food safety and the food trade;

Considering the progress made by the Regional Information System for Epidemiological Surveillance of Foodborne Diseases (SIRVETA) and its consequent usefulness for decision-making with respect to sanitary interventions;

Mindful of the progress made by the Regional Information System on Food Legislation and its great usefulness for the harmonization processes and common markets; and

Aware of the need for PAHO technical cooperation through INPPAZ and its usefulness to the support of food safety activities in the countries of the Region,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To thank to the Government of the Argentine Republic for its ongoing support for the development and operation of the Pan American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses and to request its continued co-financing of the Institute.
2. To express its satisfaction to the Director of PAHO with the progress made by INPPAZ in providing technical cooperation in food safety to the countries of the Americas.
3. To recommend to the Director of PAHO that the technical cooperation program for INPPAZ for the period 2002-2003 be approved, as proposed in the Plan of Action.

*(Third session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R3: Creation of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA)***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Having seen Document RIMSA12/11: *Proposal for the Creation of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA)*;

Considering that major outbreaks of foodborne disease have occurred throughout the world in the past 10 years, alerting country authorities to the need to take steps to prevent the risk of their transmission to the population and economic losses stemming from food contamination;

Considering that the global food safety situation was recently reviewed at the Fifty-third World Health Assembly, which issued a resolution (WHA53.15) establishing food safety as a priority and made corresponding recommendations to the Member States and the Director-General of WHO;

Taking into account Resolution CD42.R3, whereby the Directing Council of PAHO adopted the strategic plan on food protection for the Region of the Americas and requested the Director to explore the possibility of creating a regional commission for food safety to develop regional policies in this area;

Considering that the creation of the World Trade Organization has spurred the countries to review their policies and adopt the Codex Alimentarius standards as the scientific and technical foundation for guaranteeing that the food consumed by the population is safe, in addition to facilitating international food trade;

Recognizing that a commission at the appropriate level will permit leaders in the health and agriculture sectors, producers, and consumers, as well as international organizations, to collaborate in the development and coordination of technical cooperation in priority areas to ensure that the people of the Americas have access to safe food; and

Taking into account the endorsement of the proposal to establish the Pan American Commission for Food Safety and the extensive discussions on the proposed terms of reference,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To congratulate the Governments on their decision to give high priority to food safety in their policy agendas and encourage them to organize programs involving all sectors and institutions connected with food safety.
2. To approve the creation of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA).
3. To request the Director of PAHO to:
  - (a) provide technical and budgetary support for COPAIA's operations;
  - (b) convene a small working group to assemble the comments regarding the scope, framework, and terms of reference of COPAIA provided during the discussion at RIMSA 12, and present them to COPAIA;

- (c) convene a session of COPAIA as soon as possible to assess the comments assembled by the small working group and to draft terms of reference to carry out the work of COPAIA.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R4: Proposed Plan of Action of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), 2002-2003***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Recognizing the significant progress made in the implementation of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease, with the cooperation of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA);

Considering that PANAFTOSA, as a technical reference center recognized by other continents, is the suitable institution, which, acting independently and guided by the directives of the Pan American Health Organization, has full capacity to carry out and coordinate missions to analyze the sanitary situation of the countries, particularly in sanitary emergencies;

Recognizing that PANAFTOSA has gradually been incorporating technical cooperation in other zoonoses into its work, particularly in the areas of rabies elimination, the control and eradication of brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis, and epidemiological surveillance of bovine spongiform encephalopathy; and

Mindful that broadening the scope of the technical cooperation of PANAFTOSA implies adapting and integrating the epidemiological surveillance system into these new sanitary entities, based on active community participation,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To recommend that the Governing Bodies of the Pan American Health Organization analyze and adopt the plan of action for technical cooperation of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center, 2002-2003, allocating resources consistent with the programmed technical cooperation in animal health and zoonoses and the resources available in the Organization.

2. To thank the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for its annual contribution for the maintenance of PANAFTOSA and to urge that this support continue in the coming years.
3. To thank the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for its commitment to construct, as a matter of urgency, a biosafety unit in the laboratory at the current headquarters of PANAFTOSA.
4. To request that the Governments authorize an assessment of the sanitary situation in the countries by PANAFTOSA, which would involve missions by country professionals and the provision of the technical cooperation necessary for dealing with sanitary emergencies.
5. To urge the Governments, in coordination with PANAFTOSA, to implement quality management programs in the veterinary services that prioritize sanitary prevention programs, particularly for diseases in the eradication phase or diseases exotic to the Hemisphere, emphasizing the strengthening of epidemiological surveillance systems, laboratory diagnosis, and training, based on co-management by the public and private sectors.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R5: VIII Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA VIII)***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Considering

- the progress made in previous decades in the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the Southern Cone subregion;
- the progress of Colombia's eradication program, with the certification of a wide expanse of its territory as a disease-free area with vaccination;
- the efforts of the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to create the conditions required for its certification as a country free of foot-and-mouth disease without vaccination;

- the long-standing status of the Caribbean, Central America, and North America as disease-free subregions;
- the negative impact of the sanitary emergencies in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Uruguay, which reveals the need for an international group to deal with emergencies;
- the need to integrate programs across geographic boundaries and reinforce the credibility and transparency of the of animal health programs of the Region;
- the need to foster continued participation of the private sector in the co-management of national programs, maintaining its confidence that the successes achieved made will be expanded and maintained;
- that once a disease is eradicated, rigorous steps must be taken to prevent its reintroduction into the area;
- that it is necessary to review the current plan of action of the Hemispheric Plan for Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA), giving priority to prevention activities,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To endorse the recommendations of COHEFA 8.
2. To call on the Governments that still report cases of foot-and-mouth disease to intensify their efforts to eliminate clinical cases, decreasing the reservoirs of virus in the Region.
3. To recommend to the Governments that have already achieved disease-free status to maintain the resources allocated to prevention and, with a regional vision, offer support to bordering countries still struggling with this problem in order to decrease the risk of reintroducing the disease into their own territories.
4. To request PANAFTOSA to work with the Governments of the countries of the Caribbean to establish contingency plans for animal diseases.
5. To propose that the Governments that make up PHEFA support PANAFTOSA in the exercise of its new mandate as an entity for evaluating the national programs, particularly in emergency situations, as defined at the III Special Meeting and the XXVIII Regular Meeting of COSALFA.

6. To request PANAFTOSA to orient its technical cooperation toward a preventive approach, promoting active monitoring and the training of human resources at the regional level.
7. To urge the Governments to participate in the development of the information and surveillance system proposed by PANAFTOSA, strengthening confidence in the system and its role in assuring the quality of veterinary services in the Region.
8. To request the Governments to support PANAFTOSA in its mandate as a Reference Laboratory for regional studies of the viral strains in circulation, providing the necessary information for ascertaining the flows of the disease in the Region.
9. To reiterate to the Governments the importance of public and private sector co-management in the execution of long-term animal health programs, such as the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease.
10. To request PANAFTOSA to continue developing the new Plan of Action 2001-2009 for PHEFA and the proposal for the creation of a regional emergency response group.
11. To recommend to the countries that in their risk analysis they bear in mind the recommendations of the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) with regard to products that may or may not be vehicles for the transmission of the foot-and-mouth disease virus, avoiding the application of measures without an adequate scientific-technical basis.
12. To urge the Governments, once the new plan of action of PHEFA is developed and adopted, to adapt their programs to the general guidelines of the plan, and to strengthen their mechanisms for emergency response.
13. To endorse the resolutions of the XXVII and XXVIII Regular Meetings and the III Special Meeting of COSALFA.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R6: VIII Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in Latin America (REDIPRA)***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Taking into account Document RIMSA12/10: *Report on the VIII Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in Latin America*, which describes the progress made in the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs in the Region and recommends strategies to the countries and PAHO for consolidating and maintaining the improvements in the situation;

Recognizing that the risk of canine rabies still persists in some countries, as does the risk of its reemergence in countries or areas that have achieved its elimination;

Considering the growing risk to public health and the economic losses caused by sylvatic rabies in Latin America, Guyana, and in the Caribbean islands of Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago, particularly rabies transmitted by vampire bats; and

Bearing in mind the need to strengthen surveillance and the epidemiological characterization of rabies in domestic animals and wildlife, to improve care to people exposed to the risk of rabies, and to promote the use of new technologies for rabies diagnosis, surveillance, and prevention,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge the Governments to:
  - (a) allocate the necessary resources to achieve the proposed goal of eliminating, in a sustainable way, human rabies transmitted by dogs in the Americas;
  - (b) strengthen multisectoral articulation at all levels (mainly between health and agriculture) and promote the participation of municipal governments and the community in the rabies control and prevention measures in urban and rural areas;
  - (c) ensure the availability and use of immunobiologicals of proven quality based on international standards, increase the coverage of care to people exposed to the risk of rabies, and conduct active surveillance of rabies in dogs, livestock, and wildlife.

2. To request the Director of PAHO to:
  - (a) continue to provide technical cooperation to the national programs through the Program on Veterinary Public Health with a view to consolidating the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs and maintaining rabies control in wildlife;
  - (b) promote cooperation among countries and sectors, mainly between health and agriculture, for the purpose of technical and scientific exchange aimed at strengthening diagnostic methods, the production of immunobiologicals, and the development of new technologies in rabies prevention and control;
  - (c) coordinate joint evaluations of the national programs for the purpose of determining the need for changes consistent with the epidemiological situation and the health sector reform process, chiefly decentralization;
  - (d) invite the participation of Grenada, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago in meetings of REDIPRA.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R7: Zoonoses***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING***

Having reviewed the topics presented in the Panel: *Zoonoses of Importance for the Economy and Public Health*;

Considering the rising trend in trade, tourism, and services among countries as a result of the regional and subregional integration agreements, and the risk that these activities pose for the spread of diseases, among them zoonoses; and

Taking into account the constant threat of new zoonoses and the economic and social significance of prevalent and reemerging zoonoses, whose prevention and control require coordinated, intersectoral efforts with the active participation of the relevant social actors,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge the Governments to:

- (a) implement monitoring and surveillance systems that rely on laboratory diagnosis for the detection of possible emerging diseases that can affect man and animals alike, maintaining contingency plans to immediately combat these maladies;
- (b) adopt the risk analysis methodology to address and minimize the risk of emerging (exotic) zoonoses detected outside the Region;
- (c) form committees to strengthen multisectoral articulation at all levels, with the participation of social actors, within the framework of decentralization and community participation;
- (d) strengthen their political will and identify resources for the prevention and control of prevalent and emerging zoonoses of importance for the economy and public health.

2. To request the Director of PAHO to:

- (a) support the Governments in the preparation and development of a plan for zoonosis prevention and control, in the design and execution of risk analysis, and in the formulation of contingency plans to deal with the possible introduction of exotic zoonoses into the Region;
- (b) promote coordination among bilateral and international technical cooperation agencies for the mobilization of technical and financial resources to support zoonosis prevention and control programs and for contingency plans aimed at the prevention of emerging zoonoses;
- (c) prepare the strategies and plans of action for the elimination of hydatidosis in the Southern Cone, Andean, and other subregions;
- (d) promote the implementation of the subregional strategies and plan of action for the control and elimination of brucellosis.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R8: Keeping the Americas Free of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE)***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Taking into account Document RIMSA11/17: *The Current Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Situation*, which describes the characteristics and evolution of this disease and its sanitary implications for the international trade in animals and animal products;

Considering the recommendations of the PAHO/WHO Consultation on BSE: Scientific Bases for Policy-making in the Americas, held in Montevideo, Uruguay from 9 to 11 April 2001 (Information Document RIMSA12/INF/7); and

Aware of the importance of keeping the Region of the Americas free of BSE and the need to strengthen national epidemiological surveillance systems to minimize the risk of the disease entering the Hemisphere,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge the Governments to:
  - (a) consider for adoption the recommendations of the Montevideo Consultation on BSE, with emphasis on surveillance and monitoring, risk analysis, and laboratory diagnosis;
  - (b) harmonize their policies and standards to keep BSE from being introduced into the Region, based on the International Zoosanitary Code of the International Office of Epizootics (OIE);
  - (c) strengthen interagency and intercountry articulation for information and technology exchange;
  - (d) conduct risk analysis to determine the threat that this disease poses to the Americas, and to conduct surveillance to continually verify its absence in every country;
  - (e) formulate, through the Regional Coordination for the Americas of the OIE and in collaboration with PAHO, a proposal to the OIE International Committee to step up the work of the Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission on

- BSE to a level of activity similar to the work under way with regard to foot-and-mouth disease and bovine plague;
- (f) propose that the OIE certify the status of the countries with respect to BSE;
  - (g) promote joint work between the Ministries of Agriculture and Public Health to prevent the entry of BSE and assure the necessary diagnostic capability and policies.
2. To request the Director of PAHO to:
- (a) support the Governments in implementing the recommendations of the Montevideo Consultation;
  - (b) promote interagency coordination and cooperation among countries to achieve a common approach in the Region to policy development and the harmonization of standards and procedures for BSE.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R9: Expression of Appreciation to the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and to the Government of the State of São Paulo***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

Taking into account the offer of the Government of the Republic of Brazil to serve as the venue of the XII Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture;

Conscious of the excellent organization and logistical support provided by the federal authorities of Brazil and by the state of São Paulo for the realization of the Meeting;

Honored by the presence at the Meeting of the President of Brazil, Dr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso;

Acknowledging the results of the Meeting, which strengthen the principles of Pan-Americanism and the fight for equity that characterize the Americas Region; and

Moved by the hospitality and treatment received,

***RESOLVES:***

To unanimously express its sincere gratitude to the authorities of the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil, headed by the President of the Republic and his Ministers of Health, Agriculture, and Foreign Affairs, and to the Governor and the Secretary of Agriculture and Food Supply of the state of São Paulo.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*

***RIMSA12.R10: Expression of Appreciation to the Pan American Health Organization***

***THE 12th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING,***

***Considering that***

- the countries of the Americas are making good progress in programs for the eradication of diseases that affect human and animal health, production, and the international market;
- the countries have required technologies in order to move toward the goal of eradicating diseases that affect both animals and public health; and
- the Veterinary Public Health Program of PAHO through its centers, PANAFTOSA and INPPAZ, and its general guidance has responded to the countries' needs,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To express its appreciation for the support provided by Dr. Primo Arámbulo III as Coordinator of the Veterinary Public Health Program.
2. To acknowledge the support, transparency, and unfailing willingness to provide assistance of the Administration of PAHO, represented by Dr. George A. O. Alleyne.

*(Fourth session, 3 May 2001)*