



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION 67th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

OPENING CEREMONY

The 67th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa opened on 28th August 2017 at Elephant Hills Resort in Victoria Falls, Republic of Zimbabwe. The meeting was officially opened by His Excellency Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

In attendance were the Honorable Dr. David Pagwesese Parirenyatwa, Minister of Health and Child Care of Zimbabwe, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO, Dr A. Nascimento do Rosario, President of the 66th Regional Committee who is also the Minister of Health of Cabo Verde, Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa, as well as delegations from the Member States of the WHO African Region and partners.

PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE URGES AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO PRIORITISE HEALTH IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS



**H.E Robert Mugabe,
The President of Zimbabwe**



WHO Director-General Sets New Mission for the Organization



The Director-General of the World Health Organization Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has set out a new mission for the organization which is to “keep the world safe, improve health and serve the vulnerable”.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 67th Session of the WHO Regional Committee in Victoria Falls, Republic of Zimbabwe, Dr Tedros informed the delegates that the mission is set within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which guide global development including public health.

To achieve the mission, Dr Tedros outlined five strategies that will define WHO’s work under the 13th General Programme of Work (GPW) for the period 2019-2023 currently under development.

The strategies are the ability to prevent, detect and respond to epidemics including polio outbreaks and antimicrobial resistance; provision of health services in emergencies and rebuilding health systems in fragile conflict and vulnerable states; helping countries to strengthen systems to progress towards universal health coverage; drive progress towards the specific SDG health targets; and provision of a governance platform for health.

According to Dr Tedros, in order to fully implement the strategies, WHO will have to change and do its work differently. First, there will be more focus on outcomes

The President of Zimbabwe, H.E Robert Mugabe has called on African governments to prioritise health in their national development agenda. He said the health challenges facing the Region such as communicable and non-communicable diseases, maternal and child deaths require concerted efforts to address.

“Let us therefore push health to take its deserved prominence on our agendas in our sub-regional groups, at the African Union level and indeed on the global forum,” he said as he officially opened the 67th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa going on currently in Victoria Falls.

“The adage that life is health and health is wealth holds true”, the president reminded the delegates adding that “we have all witnessed the interplay between health and development.

President Mugabe also noted that Africa is disproportionately represented on the global disease burden for communicable and non-communicable diseases. “We must ask ourselves why this is so, and more importantly, what can we do to arrest and reverse these trends,” he said.

According to President Mugabe, part of the solution to these health challenges is to evolve and continuously build the formal health care systems to respond to the currently broader health issues. This, he added, will have to go hand-in-hand with addressing many determinants of health through adoption of the right supporting policies and interventions in non-health sectors.

Such determinants of health, he pointed out, include educating the girl child, designing better roads, planning urban settlements, empowering communities and managing climate change. “We must therefore provide the solutions across these sectors for better health outcomes, and as leaders, it is our duty to foster this broader approach,” he said.

President Mugabe urged delegates to explore ways of retaining experienced health workers and of investing more in human resources for health production. The President noted that while African

and impact so that end results of WHO's work are "the people whose health is protected or promoted by it". In addition, WHO will set priorities out of the many competing needs in order to get best value for investment as guided by the SDGs.

Furthermore, WHO will become more operational especially in vulnerable and conflict states in addition to continuing with its normative and standard setting functions. At the same time, WHO will put countries at the centre of its work because health challenges and indeed results are attained at country level. Finally, WHO will provide political leadership by advocating for health with world leaders, mobilize them for political commitment for health to achieve Universal Health Coverage.

Dr Tedros concluded his remarks by reminding the delegates that "we are here because we care about the health of the world's people. They must be foremost in all our minds this week. The challenges we face are great. So must be our ambitions."

governments have committed to invest 15% of national budgets into health, financing for health remains a big challenge. "We need to further innovate around how we finance health and how we efficiently and sustainably invest such financing" he said.

Outgoing RC66 Chairman Welcomes Dr Tedros to the WHO Regional Committee for Africa

The outgoing Chairman of the 66th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa Dr Arlindo N. do Rosario has congratulated the new WHO Director-General upon his election to the highest office in the Organization's secretariat.

"Allow me to welcome in our presence Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director-General, and to congratulate the Member States of our Region for the consistency of their position that culminated in his election by the World Health Assembly early this year," he said.

Dr Arlindo highlighted some of the health achievement attained last year including implementation of the Transformation Agenda which is driving the WHO reform process at the regional and country levels. He also mentioned the challenges faced such as the management of health risks and the prevention of outbreaks such as Yellow Fever, Sexually Transmissible Diseases, including HIV/ AIDS, and the implementation of the International Health Regulations by many Member States

Dr Arlindo also pointed out the Global Strategy for Health Human Resources, the Universal Health Coverage and the indicators and targets of Sustainable Development Goals number 3 as areas that will need more attention in the coming years.

"If our countries have stronger and effective health systems, we will have a much more stronger and effective WHO too, since it is the Member States that develop policies and implement the necessary activities for the well-being of our communities". He added that if both WHO and Member States do their business, there will more reasons to celebrate in the future – a continent proud of

RC67 eJournal



The RC67 Secretariat is pleased to announce the introduction of the Electronic Journal (eJournal) that replaces the printed version published in the previous RCs. The easy to use eJournal will improve interactions with our readers and has new features such as embedded videos,

photo galleries, audio recordings and much more. The eJournal can be accessed from all electronic devices, computers, laptops, iPads and all types of mobile devices by email and can be accessed at any time during the RC.

For those who wish to receive the electronic Journal, please send an email to Phyllis Jiri at jjrip@who.int

THE ROLL BACK MALARIA (RBM) PARTNERSHIP

A side event will be held tomorrow (30 August 2017) from 19:00 to 20:00 hours on "The revitalized Roll Back

Malaria Partnership”.

The objectives of the event are to: (a) Discuss the new governance structure of the RBM Partnership; and how it relates to WHO and the member states; (b) Introduce the New RBM CEO; (c) Update delegates on the activities of the revitalized partnership; (d) Update delegates on the malaria elimination in the Sahel and (e) Agree on how to work together.

Programme:

- Introduction of the session, Dr Magaran Bagayoko, representing the Director of Communicable Diseases Cluster, WHO Regional Office for Africa
- Welcome and opening remarks, Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa
- Overview of the new RBM Partnership structure, Dr Kesete Admasu, CEO RBM Secretariat
- Update on malaria elimination in the Sahel, Dr Magaran Bagayoko, representing the Director of Communicable Diseases Cluster, WHO Regional Office for Africa
- Discussion and next steps
- Closing remarks Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa

its people and a world with better health indicators and quality of life.

THE WHO REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA PRESENTS THE REPORT OF WHO'S WORK IN THE AFRICAN REGION FROM 2016 TO 2017



The WHO Regional Director (RD) for Africa Dr Matshidiso Moeti, delivered her scorecard for the 2016/17

biennium on the

first day of the ongoing 67th Session of the African Regional Committee (RC67). In her address, Dr Moeti highlighted a few opportunities that have contributed to advancement of the Universal Health Coverage and health system strengthening agenda in the Region.

These include the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), increased use of digital technologies for health, growing private sector engagement and involvement in health and the demographic dividends among others. Furthermore, she highlighted the catalytic role which the transformation agenda has played in accelerating the organization's work and results. She identified the complex multifaceted nature of the African Region with recurrent disease outbreaks, disasters, growing threat of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), climate change and weak health systems as challenges to the public health of the Region.

Dr Moeti then proceeded to summarize the major achievements which the WHO Regional Office made in the six programme categories of WHO namely communicable diseases, NCDs, promoting health through the life course, health systems, emergencies and corporate services.

Regarding financial utilization. Dr Moeti reported that the organization was able to utilize 76% (US\$1 billion) out of the US\$ 1.3 billion which was provided as of June 2017. However, she pointed out that NCDs and

AFRICA UNION COMMISSIONER PLEDGES CLOSER WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH WHO

The Commissioner for Social Affairs at the African Union Commissions, Her Excellency Mrs. Amira Elfadil has committed to work with the World Health Organization to meet the health needs of the African people.

Mrs Elfadil who was speaking at the opening ceremony of the 67th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa added that this collaboration “will contribute to the achievement of the Health Aspirations of Agenda 2063 as well as the SDG's targets on health.”

Mrs Elfadil noted that the continental responsibility for addressing the health needs of the African people to ensure *a high standard of living, quality of life, sound health and wellbeing* is expressed in the aspirations of Agenda 2063. She therefore called for strong partnerships between the Commission, Member States and WHO to serve continent better.

“The ‘Africa we Want’ is within our reach and we as Africans need only to strengthen our partnerships and turn our Health Aspirations into a reality” she concluded.

EXHIBITION

The exhibition booths are located in the front of the Conference Center and will be open throughout the meeting. The exhibits include the following items: publications, medical literature, posters etc., provided by the Member States of the African Region, WHO Headquarters and the WHO Regional Office.



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SIM CARDS

Local SIM cards can be purchase for 1USD in the Hotel shop on the first floor next to the Business Center. Airtime can be purchased as well.

RC67 BADGES

Kindly proceed as soon as possible after your arrival to the “*Accreditation and badge production office*” which is located in the Pagota Room.

30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MECTIZAN DONATION PROGRAM

A parallel event will take place today, organized by the

health system were underfunded and called for intensification of resource mobilization efforts to address these and other funding gaps.



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In the area of communicable diseases, thirty countries adopted the “treat all” HIV policy which has expanded access to antiretroviral

Mectizan Donation Program, from 13:00 to 14:00 in room Kalala, at the Elephant Hills Resort Hotel.

Among other goals, this event aims to present the progress on the implementation of the road map for the elimination of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). More emphasis will be put on the 30 years of the success of Ivermectine donation by the program.

AGENDA

29 August 2017 | 13:00 - 14:00 | Place: Kalala Room, Elephant Hills Hotel, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

13:00 - Welcome, dessert and coffee

13:15 - Event starts – introduction by Dr. Yao Sodahlon

13:20 - Opening remarks by Dr. Matshidiso Moeti

13:30 - Remarks by MSD and video from Mr. Ken Frazier

13:35 - Remarks by GSK by Dr. Mark Bradley

13:40 - Opening of remarks from ministers, Dr. Mwele Malecela

13:45 - Remarks by Minister of Health, Nigeria, Hon. Prof. Isaac Folorunsho Adewole

13:55 - Remarks by Minister of Health, Cameroon, Hon. Mr Mama Fouda André

14:05 - Remarks by Minister of Health, Uganda, Hon Mrs Sarah Opendi*Achieng

14:15 Presentation of LF award to Togo by Task Force for Global Health CEO, Mr. Dave Ross

14:20 Closing remarks by Dr. Mwele Malecela

therapy to 54% (13.8 million persons) in the Region. Eleven countries were supported to shorten multidrug resistant tuberculosis treatment duration from 24 months to 9-12 months and a reduction in HIV patients co-infected with tuberculosis was achieved in the Region as a result of improved HIV screening and treatment.

Other achievements include piloting of the first malaria vaccine in Kenya, Malawi and Ghana, production of endemicity map for five neglected tropical diseases, mass drug administration in twelve countries and recovery of 132 million tablets of anti-NTD medicines by the Expanded Special Project for Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases (ESPEN). Dr Moeti commended Togo that for eliminating lymphatic filariasis.

On NCDs, Dr Moeti reported that 11 stepwise approach to NCDs (STEP) surveys to identify risk factors for NCDs were conducted in the past five years, more African countries adopted the anti-tobacco laws and regulations and over 150 health care providers were trained on mental health at the community level.

The RD noted that the Addis Ababa Declaration on Immunization was endorsed by African Heads of State and there was successful introduction of pneumococcal conjugate and rotavirus vaccines in the national immunization schedules of 38 and 31 countries respectively. Forty eight million people were vaccinated against meningitis A and support was provided to eleven countries to improve nutrition surveillance capacity in the course of the biennium.

Concerning health system strengthening, Dr Moeti said that the first regional technical consultation on UHC and SDGs which ultimately culminated in the development of a framework for integrating health system strengthening and UHC was conducted. In addition, access to good quality essential medicines and the challenges of antimicrobial resistance were addressed during the reporting period. The organization also supported generation and management of public health data to support evidence-based decision making in the Region.

With respect to health security and emergencies, the RD enumerated the key

achievements of the Regional Office as the activation of the Incident Management Systems for all public health emergencies in the Region and support to 23 countries to conduct outbreak risk profiling.

In the area of corporate services, the RD reported improvements in strategic engagement with African leaders and stakeholders with visits to several countries, heads of state, increased collaborations with the African Union Commission, the Africa Centre for Disease Control and the West Africa Health Organization. She also highlighted the evaluation of the transformation agenda, introduction of results-based programme management systems and key performance indicators and functional review of the WHO countries as key achievements among others.

In conclusion, Dr Moeti identified good progress in outbreak response, health system strengthening and reducing priority diseases as the three key achievements of the office while noting the Regional Office was gradually evolving into a more effective and transparent organization. She welcomed the 3% increase in the assessed contributions to the organization and thanked the Member States for their support. In their reaction to the report, the delegates congratulated her on the achievements and emphasized the need for WHO to continue supporting them to address the emerging public health challenges in the region especially the NCDs.

BANKING

An ATM, located in the Business Center of the Hotel on the first floor is available. Card payments are accepted almost everywhere.

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MEALS

Coffee Breaks and Lunch will be served free of charge to participants during the meeting. Further catering facilities are readily available for refreshments and meals in the 4 restaurants and 3 bars of the Elephant Hills Hotel. The Breakfast Buffet is open from 7:00-10:00 in the Hotel Restaurant. For dinner, WHO shuttles are available to drive you to town, at 19:00 on Saturday and Sunday. Lunch shuttle departs from the reception at 12:30.

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ACCESS TO THE INTERNET

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