



**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA**

**ORIGINAL: ENGLISH**

Fifty-sixth session

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 28 August–1 September 2006

Provisional agenda item 16

**GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH FOR HEALTH, 2008**

1. During the fifty-fifth session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa held in Maputo, Mozambique in August 2005, various activities were planned as part of the preparation for the 2008 conference. These included the document “Health research: agenda for the African Region” for the fifty-sixth session of the Regional Committee; a preparatory meeting of countries hosted by Algeria; and solicitation of bids from countries willing to host the 2008 conference.
2. Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa offered to host the conference. Upon reflection, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Senegal withdrew their invitations. To facilitate consensus, Algeria withdrew its invitation and offered to host one of the preparatory meetings. Senegal asked to be actively involved in preparations. Mozambique withdrew in favour of South Africa. The Regional Committee mandated the Regional Director to consult with countries in order to reach consensus regarding the host country and to report either during the World Health Assembly in May 2006 or during the fifty-sixth session of the Regional Committee in 2006.
3. Documents offering to host the conference have been received from three Member States: Burkina Faso, Mali and South Africa. The Regional Director has gratefully acknowledged receipt of the documents and has informed the honourable ministers of health of the need to reach a consensus regarding selection of the host country.
4. At the global level, a group has been set up by WHO headquarters to work on the preparation of the 2008 conference. Its members include representatives from the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED), Global Forum for Health Research (GFHR), World Bank, and WHO focal points for Evidence and Information for Policy, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, and Research Policy and Cooperation.
5. High-level ministerial meetings on health research for disease control and development were held in 2006 in Abuja (March) and in Accra (June). Communiqués from the two meetings discussed the critical issues that limit the translation of research to health policy and systems development. The meetings also identified strategies for the use of health research for disease control and the improvement of public health in countries with high burdens of disease.

6. A technical paper, "Health research: agenda for the WHO African Region," was reviewed by the Programme Subcommittee for the Regional Committee. The recommendations of both the Abuja and Accra meetings were incorporated in the document.

7. WHO is in the process of developing a comprehensive regional report by collecting core information and indicators on the current status of health research and knowledge systems in the African Region. The report is expected to be presented at the preparatory meeting for discussion and endorsement prior to its presentation at the 2008 global conference. It is important that ministers of health, education, science, technology and other sectors involved in health-related research participate in the preparatory meeting.

8. The Regional Committee is requested:

- (a) to select the country that will host the 2008 Global Conference on Research for Health,
- (b) to confirm that Algeria will host the meeting preparatory to the 2008 conference, preferably in mid-2008,
- (c) to appoint the following Member States as the steering committee to oversee the preparation of the Algeria meeting: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal.