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YANUCA ISLAND DECLARATION

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YANUCA ISLAND DECLARATION

Adopted at the
Conference of the Ministers of Health of the Pacific Islands
Yanuca Island, Fiji, 10 March 1995
Sponsored by
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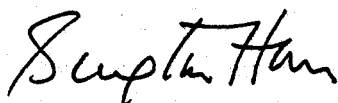
Yanuca Island Declaration

FOREWORD

The World Health Organization is proud to be associated with the historic Yanuca Island Declaration. It is at once a record of achievement, a spur to realize noble aims, and a stimulus to others to follow suit.

In the Western Pacific Region of WHO, we are looking at future directions in health and human development stretching beyond the end of this century. There we see new challenges and new opportunities. To date, our efforts in health have been centred around disease problems: prevention where possible, treatment when necessary, and rehabilitation where damage has occurred. I have proposed a new approach, where quality of life is taken into account, which emphasizes positive health, and the promotion of healthier living. My document, *New horizons in health*, stresses the way in which this must be linked with a sensitivity to the protection of life and the role of the environment, especially in fragile ecosystems. To accomplish these aims we will need to further strengthen intersectoral collaboration, as we originally envisioned in primary health care. This will remain a major feature of health action for the future. In view of this, I warmly commend the concept of "healthy islands" that has been adopted in the Declaration as the unifying theme for health promotion and health protection in the island nations of the

Pacific for the twenty-first century. Further, I acknowledge with satisfaction the way in which the Declaration has taken into account the cultural and social values of Pacific societies, and sought to address problems in a suitable way. I feel confident that, with the continued strong participation in this process of change and development by both the highest levels of government, and the people of the Pacific island countries, we are looking to a very positive future.



S.T. Han, MD, Ph.D.
Regional Director
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YANUCA ISLAND DECLARATION

INTRODUCTION

Responding to the economic changes which are affecting quality of life in Pacific island countries, and taking into account the approaches articulated in the document *New horizons in health* endorsed by the Regional Committee of the World Health Organization's Western Pacific Region at its forty-fifth session in 1994, a Ministerial Conference on Health for the Pacific Islands was convened in Fiji from 6 to 10 March 1995. The priority issues for the conference were human resources development; health promotion and health protection; and supply and management of pharmaceutical and essential drugs. Participants reviewed the level of human resources development in the Pacific island countries; examined the various trends and changes affecting the health situation; and identified possible strategies and options which could be adopted in the light of each country's unique situation.

During the first two and half days (6-8 March), Permanent Secretaries/Directors met as a working group to formulate and discuss recommendations for the Ministers to consider during their two-day conference on Yanuca Island (9-10 March). The Permanent Secretaries/Directors' meeting was held in Suva, close to the Fiji School of Medicine, its teaching hospital, the Colonial War Memorial Hospital and the Fiji School of Nursing.

Health Ministers and Permanent Secretaries/Directors from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Samoa, together with observers from Australia, France, Japan, New Zealand, United States of America, regional organizations and United Nations agencies attended the Ministerial level sessions on Yanuca Island.

Over the two days on Yanuca Island, the working papers prepared by the working group were discussed, and the priority issues were defined in the context of Pacific island needs. It was confirmed that sustainable development relating to the three priority issues discussed is consistent with the political commitment for people-centred development which already exists in all Pacific island countries. It was also emphasized that the development approaches will have to be consistent with the values which make up the unique Pacific way of life.

Consensus was reached on a course of action to place the health and well-being of Pacific islanders at the centre of national development plans. This consensus is reflected in the Yanuca Island Declaration on Health in the Pacific in the 21st Century. The Declaration embodies the collective concern and commitment of all the participating Pacific island countries. It commits countries to act to enhance the quality of life and the continuing well-being of people. It also calls on concerned donor-countries and funding agencies, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, regional and subregional organizations and institutions and nongovernmental organizations, some of whom participated in the Conference, to provide technical and financial support. Pacific island countries are challenged to formulate and implement strategies to meet their commitments.

THE YANUCA ISLAND DECLARATION ON HEALTH IN THE PACIFIC IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The Conference of Ministers of Health of the Pacific Islands, meeting on Yanuca Island, Fiji, on this 10th day of March 1995, responding to the challenge of changing global conditions and the priority issues raised during the forty-fifth session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific;

Believing that:

- new challenges in health in the twenty-first century call for clarity of purpose and broad-based participation to achieve healthy islands;
- healthy islands should be places where:
 - children are nurtured in body and mind;
 - environments invite learning and leisure;
 - people work and age with dignity;
 - ecological balance is a source of pride;

Endorses:

- the concepts reflected in the Western Pacific Region document *New horizons in health*;

Adopts:

- the concept of “healthy islands” as the unifying theme for health promotion and health protection in the island nations of the Pacific for the twenty-first century;

Recognizing that:

- Pacific island countries share many common features in terms of geography, population size, socioeconomic status, history, culture, and particularly fragile ecosystems;
- a wide range of health-related challenges needs to be addressed in addition to those highlighted at this Conference, particularly the special needs of those in remote and rural areas;
- limited resources in relation to health personnel, facilities, supplies and materials, require Pacific island countries to work closely together and share resources in achieving health goals;
- many training institutions and programmes for the health professions in countries of the Pacific already exist, including medical, nursing and allied health science schools in American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Northern Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu;
- the WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific, at its forty-first session, endorsed the concept of a network of existing health training and education institutions in the Pacific;

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- there is an urgent need for coordinated action among these institutions in training human resources for health to address the special health care needs of the Pacific islands;
 - health care processes need to change, becoming more holistic and better integrated and linked through networks to meet the complex challenges of the future;
 - health promotion and health protection are essential components of this change process;
 - environmental health must be integrated with other health programmes, and linked to the activities of other sectors;
 - in implementing environmental health programmes, new status needs to be granted to environmental health professionals in government services;
 - the 1989 WHO Plan of Action for the Development of the Fiji School of Medicine and the 1994 draft report on the Fiji School of Medicine Development Plan have set the direction for the School;
 - improvements in quality, safety, efficacy, availability of drugs and cost effectiveness could be made by Pacific island countries through bulk purchasing schemes for pharmaceuticals, essential drugs, vaccines, medical supplies and equipment;

Being mindful that:

- joint approaches must allow for discretion within countries to accommodate individual differences;
- intercountry approaches must be implemented with flexibility that is responsive to changing circumstances;

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- resource implications must be clearly defined and understood in developing and implementing these new approaches;
 - training programme development initiatives should consider the full spectrum of health workforce categories as appropriate in the respective countries, including medical, nursing, oral health, pharmacy and the broad range of other allied health professionals;
 - academic policies relating to the range and design of educational programmes and student intake should be closely linked to the current and projected health workforce needs of Pacific island countries;
 - improvement of collaborative activities and partnership strategies between service providers and training institutions is needed;
 - while there are potential benefits in embarking on properly coordinated bulk purchasing initiatives, such initiatives should not undermine national sovereignty, nor incur extra cost or cause delay in delivery of vaccines and essential drugs;
 - collaboration in bulk purchasing schemes should not merely reduce costs but should contribute to higher standards of health care through the rational use of drugs;

AGREES, in relation to the development of the health workforce:

- to intensify efforts to further strengthen collaborative relationships through networking, and involve all existing training institutions in the development of human resources for health in the Pacific;

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- to reaffirm the role of the Fiji School of Medicine as a major training institution for health workforce development in the Pacific, and to encourage the Government of Fiji to finalize and implement the 1994 Development Plan;
 - to endorse the intention of the Government of Fiji to make the Fiji School of Medicine an autonomous institution within the Ministry of Health with provisions for policy input by other Pacific island countries, and to support appropriate financial arrangements for sustainability;
 - to further review the appropriateness of the first tier Primary Care Practitioners programme in meeting the health workforce needs of Pacific island countries;
 - to introduce postgraduate training at the Fiji School of Medicine to complement the existing postgraduate training programmes at the University of Papua New Guinea;

AGREES also, in relation to environmental health:

- to encourage governments to designate a focal point with an appropriate mandate and sufficient authority to design and implement the activities which follow from this agreement;
- to participate in designing a common protocol for developing national action plans delineating these activities;
- to develop national action plans which align with the unique health and environmental needs of each country;
- to jointly identify factors which adversely influence environmental health;

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- to share information concerning effective policies, legislation, intersectoral actions and other enabling strategies to promote health and protect the environment;
 - to identify innovative approaches, such as the healthy islands concept, and promote their application;
 - to collaborate in building capacity at all levels to develop and manage environmental health programmes and activities;
 - to grant new status to environmental health professionals in government services;
 - to formulate performance indicators to measure outcomes, and monitor and evaluate environmental health initiatives, including training;

AGREES further, in relation to the supply and management of pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and essential drugs in the Pacific:

- to initiate collaborative programmes to promote rational drug use and the development of national drug policies;
- to establish a multidisciplinary committee to further analyse the benefits of establishing a bulk purchasing scheme;
- to design a model framework for drug legislation and regulatory controls which could be customized to the requirements of the respective countries;
- to develop a core, essential drugs list using generic names that are currently available in all countries, to be updated every two years;

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- to establish or identify a reference laboratory for quality testing of pharmaceutical supplies in the Pacific;
 - to standardize quality assurance procedures by requiring from manufacturers, among other things:
 - certification of analysis;
 - evidence of compliance with good manufacturing practice;
 - evidence of participation in the WHO certification scheme;
 - expiry dates when purchasing drugs;
 - to urge Pacific island countries which have not yet participated in the WHO certification scheme to initiate action to do so;
 - to encourage standardization of essential equipment, such as X-ray machines, to enhance better servicing and maintenance arrangements;
 - to support the development of appropriate training in pharmaceuticals and operation and maintenance of biomedical equipment to facilitate the development of simple inventory procedures and utilization surveillance mechanisms, including exchange of information on accredited suppliers of drugs and equipment;
 - to establish and maintain an inventory of health technology and expertise available in Pacific island countries and promote access to, and utilization of, these resources and expertise;
 - to investigate, analyse and document traditional and herbal medicines that can be used in Pacific island countries;

CONCLUDES that:

- all countries in the Pacific must strive to work together towards a healthy island state through sharing of information, technology and expertise for the betterment of the environment and health status of the people of these island nations. To this end, the Conference urges the Ministers of Health to gain endorsement of this Declaration from their respective governments;
- all concerned donor countries and funding agencies, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, regional and subregional organizations and institutions and nongovernmental organizations, some of whom participated in the Conference as observers are invited to continue to provide technical and financial support to Pacific island nations in formulating and implementing their proposed strategies and options for human resource development, health protection and health promotion, supply and management of pharmaceutical and essential drugs.

10 March 1995