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**REPORT ON THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE  
MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE**

The *Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture* (RIMSA) is the only high-level forum in the Region for collaboration and coordination between the health and agriculture sectors. In this forum, international cooperation in areas related to veterinary public health is discussed. The meeting brings together representatives of the two sectors and of international organizations; the private sector participates as an observer. RIMSA seeks new ways to address common problems, stretching beyond institutional and intersectoral boundaries. The overarching theme of RIMSA 14 was “Agriculture and Health: Synergy for Local Development.” The aim in selecting that theme was to strengthen intersectoral partnerships to meet, through local development, the goals of the Millennium Declaration related to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. Also discussed were topics relating to diseases originating from animals or animal products that pose a threat to public health, such as avian influenza and neglected zoonotic diseases. In addition, several topics related to international trade in food and the revision of the International Zoosanitary Code were discussed. The meeting underscored the current need for international institutions that will enable countries to join forces to generate collective action and pursue common objectives.

The meeting noted the importance of international forums and mechanisms that will help the countries take collective action to achieve common objectives through intersectoral coordination.

1. The Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA) was created in 1968 as a forum geared principally to the ministers of agriculture. Since 2001, it has also included the participation of ministers of health from Member States. This forum, which is held every two years, has been one of the most important political forums for ensuring the success of regional veterinary public health initiatives, including the elimination of dog-transmitted human rabies, the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, and food safety. In recent years, RIMSA has become a venue for joint discussions on health and agriculture by representatives from Member States, various international cooperation agencies, and the private sector. Subjects of enormous importance for the Region are discussed in the framework of RIMSA, including bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), the threat of avian influenza, the effort to eliminate hunger and poverty, and the introduction of genetically modified foods.

2. The RIMSA 14 was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Mexico City from 21 to 22 April 2005. The meeting was convened by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB), in compliance with Resolution CD17.R19, adopted by the 17th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in 1967, and Resolution CD43.R5 ratified by the 43rd Directing Council in 2001.

3. The overarching theme of RIMSA 14 was “Agriculture and Health: Synergy for Local Development.” The aim behind the selection of that theme was to strengthen intersectoral partnerships to foster local development and thus meet the goals of the Millennium Declaration related to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. The meeting brought together representatives of the health and agriculture sectors and of international organizations involved in the two sectors, as well as representatives of the private sector, to discuss, at the highest political level, international cooperation in areas related to veterinary public health and to seek new ways of addressing common problems, stretching beyond institutional and intersectoral boundaries.

4. Intersectoral collaboration between health and agriculture is of critical importance in order to understand and take action to prevent and control zoonotic diseases that pose a potential threat to public health and the economy of countries, such as avian influenza, which was one of the topics discussed at this meeting. Seventy-five percent of the new diseases that have affected human beings in the past 10 years have been caused by pathogens originating in animals or animal products. Accordingly, the agenda for this RIMSA included several topics related to international trade in food and the revision of the International Zoosanitary Code. In addition to these new threats, the Region is faced with an unfinished agenda of neglected zoonotic diseases that affect mainly vulnerable and underserved populations. This situation constitutes a challenge for the achievement of the goals of the Millennium Declaration and the commitments of the Alma-Ata Declaration on primary health care, a topic that was also discussed at the meeting.

5. One of the sessions of RIMSAs 14 was devoted to presentation of progress reports on fulfillment of the mandates of the Governing Bodies of PAHO in the field of veterinary public health during the period 2004-2005. With the aim of analyzing the action taken in respect of those mandates, a special study was presented on progress towards the goal of eliminating dog-transmitted human rabies in the Region. Also presented were reports of the ministerial-level meetings that preceded this RIMSAs: the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-mouth Disease (COHEFA 10) and the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA 4). Those meetings discussed the action plans of the Secretariat for the new biennium in the areas of eradication of foot-and-mouth disease, zoonoses, and food safety.

6. A total of 328 persons took part in RIMSAs 14. Delegates from 36 Member States participated, among them 16 ministers of health, 13 ministers of agriculture, 6 vice ministers of health, and 3 vice ministers of agriculture. In addition, 39 representatives of the health sector and 53 representatives of the agriculture sector attended as official delegates. Also in attendance were 39 delegates from the various national embassies in Mexico. Participating as observers were representatives from other technical cooperation and finance agencies, nongovernmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, WHO Collaborating Centers, universities, and the private sector, including livestock producers and consumers and food industry representatives. Observers from the Governments of Italy, Puerto Rico, Spain, and Tunisia also attended. In all, 165 delegates participated as observers.

7. The inaugural session was attended by his Excellency Vicente Fox, President of Mexico, who delivered the inaugural address, in which he highlighted the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and declared RIMSAs 14 officially open. The following authorities also took part in the inaugural session: Dr. Luis Ernesto Derbéz, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Dr. Jaime Campos Quiroga, Minister of Agriculture of Chile and President of RIMSAs 13; Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA); and Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB), who welcomed participants on behalf of PAHO.

8. The following officers were elected unanimously for the meeting: Presidents: Dr. Julio Frenk, Secretary of Health, Mexico, and Dr. Javier Usabiaga, Secretary of Agriculture, Mexico; Vice Presidents: Dr. María Julia Muñoz, Minister of Public Health, Uruguay, and Mrs. Betsaida Viáfara Rey, Director of the Agricultural and Livestock Health Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land, Venezuela; and Rapporteur: Mr. Philippe Mathieu, Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development, Haiti. Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of PASB, served as Secretary ex officio, and Dr. Albino J. Belotto, Chief, Veterinary Public Health Unit, PASB, as Technical Secretary. The final report of the meeting is annexed.

9. In his opening remarks, Dr. Julio Frenk, Secretary of Health of Mexico, spoke on the topic “Twenty-five Years after the Alma-Ata Declaration—Collaboration between Agriculture and Health in the Americas: Experiences and New Perspectives.”

10. A panel discussion on “The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to the Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger: Strategies for Primary Health Care and Local Development” was moderated by Dr. Satyadeow Sawh, Minister of Agriculture of Guyana. Panelists included Dr. Alicia Bárcena, representative of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Dr. Norman Jirón Romero, Director-General of Accreditation and Regulation of the Ministry of Health of Nicaragua; Mr. Víctor Gabriel Barrios, Minister of Rural and Agricultural Affairs of Bolivia; Dr. Francisco Muzio Lladó, Director-General of Livestock Services of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries of Uruguay; and Dr. Richard Harrison, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture of Jamaica. In the presentations on this subject, one panelist expressed the view that the greatest obstacle to achieving the goals of the Millennium Declaration in Latin America is regional inequity in income distribution. Other panelists presented indicators illustrating the current situation of poverty, especially in rural areas of the countries of Latin America, and discussed examples of community participation in the production of food and in projects utilizing appropriate technology for small producers. The panel also examined globalization and the challenges that some countries of the Region face in meeting new regulations in the international food trade. The presentation on the goals of the Millennium Declaration related to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger elicited extensive discussion, with a number of delegates taking the floor. The importance of the topic was stressed repeatedly and examples were given of the various ways in which countries are tackling the challenge.

11. Another panel discussion, on “Summit Mandates—Advancing Human Security through Innovative Approaches Centered on Local Development,” was moderated by Dr. Peter Fernández, Associate Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (APHIS/USDA). Participating in this panel were Dr. Gabriel Montes Llamas, of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); Dr. Chelston W. D. Brathwaite, Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA); Dr. João Carlos de Souza Meirelles, Secretary of State for Science and Technology of São Paulo, Brazil; Dr. Susana Malcorra, Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Program (WFP); and Dr. Trevor A. Hassell, President of the InterAmerican Heart Foundation. One of the panel presentations concerned financing initiatives to support the mandates of the Summit of the Americas in relation to rural and social development. It was pointed out that those initiatives need to be integrated, as there can be no isolated solutions. Alluding to the Summit of the Americas (Quebec 2001), one panelist underscored the importance of agricultural health and food safety as key factors for countries’ competitiveness in international markets.

Another panelist highlighted the need for coordinated action by the different sectors and stakeholders in the face of growing interdependence among production chains, for example, the soybean, sugar, and meat chains. There was also a presentation on empowering and expanding the role of women in food security and local development.

12. A special presentation by Dr. Shigeru Omi, Regional Director of the World Health Organization's Western Pacific Regional Office (WHO/WPRO) on "Combining Human and Animal Health Expertise and Resources in the Global Response to New and Emerging Zoonoses" described the experience of the countries of Asia in grappling with the outbreaks of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and avian influenza. Dr. Omi concluded his presentation with a recommendation that the countries of the Americas should draw up preparedness plans for dealing with an influenza pandemic, with joint action by the health and agriculture sectors.

13. One of the RIMSA sessions was devoted to a panel discussion on international cooperation to address emerging problems in agriculture, livestock-breeding, and health. Mr. Roberto Rodrigues, Minister of Agriculture of Brazil, moderated the discussion. Panelists were Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of the World Organization for Animal Health (formerly Office International des Epizooties – OIE); Dr. Moisés Vargas Terán of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Dr. Jaime Alfonso Campos Quiroga, Minister of Agriculture of Chile; Mr. Oscar Manuel Gutiérrez R., Executive Director of the International Regional Organization for Plant Protection and Animal Health (RIOPPAH); Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of PASB; and Mr. Bernardo López, Vice Minister of Agriculture of Guatemala. Among the topics discussed by this panel was "The Current Situation of New and Emerging Animal Diseases—the International Zoosanitary Code as Basis for Policy and Trade." The subject generated controversy and elicited extensive discussion in response to comments made by delegates. Participants emphasized the need to coordinate the cooperation activities of the various international organizations in order to avoid duplication and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the cooperation provided. In the discussion on initiatives for food security, food safety, and trans-border animal diseases, it was emphasized that hunger in this Region is both morally and economically objectionable. It was also pointed out that hunger, poverty, and indigence persist and are growing worse, despite the availability of food. With regard to inter-country cooperation in the international food trade and its implications for health and development, it was recommended that all sectors and cooperation institutions should coordinate their efforts with a view to harmonizing the standards for compliance with established sanitary and phytosanitary measures. With regard to the subject of neglected diseases, especially zoonoses, in vulnerable populations, it was pointed out that some communicable diseases, many of which are zoonotic, tend to be overlooked by the health sector in the developing world, despite the significant burden that they represent for people living in poverty. These

neglected diseases pose a major challenge to meeting the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

14. In a special presentation, Dr. Josette Bijou, Minister of Health and Population of Haiti, described the status of efforts to eliminate dog-transmitted human rabies in Latin America, which is one of the mandates of PAHO. Drawing attention to the substantial decline in the disease and to the Region's closeness to achieving the goal of elimination, she urged Member States to reaffirm the international commitment to the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs and provide support to countries where cases of the disease continue to occur. Several delegates described the efforts put forth by their countries to achieve a significant reduction in cases of both human and canine rabies in the Region. Delegates also acknowledged the work of PAHO in providing technical support to countries for the control of the disease, highlighted the epidemiological study undertaken, and voiced support for the preparation of a plan of action for the prevention and control of rabies in the Americas for the period 2005-2009.

15. The progress reports on the Secretariat's fulfillment of the various mandates of the Governing Bodies of PAHO in the field of veterinary public health during 2004-2005 were presented by Dr. Albino J. Belotto, Chief of the Veterinary Public Health Unit of PASB; Dr. Eduardo Correa, Director of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA); and Dr. Genaro García, Regional Adviser on Food Safety, Veterinary Public Health Unit, PASB. It was reported that the Unit had intensified its efforts to achieve effective integration between the health and agriculture sectors—in both the public and private domains—and to strengthen national and regional policies on issues relating to food safety, zoonoses, and foot-and-mouth disease in order to improve living conditions for the peoples of the Region. The Plan of Action for PANAFTOSA, 2006-2007, was also outlined. Next, Dr. José Ángel del Valle Molina, Director General of Animal Health for the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries, and Food (SAGARPA) of Mexico and Chairman of COHEFA 10, presented the report and resolutions adopted by that Committee. Delegates recognized the work of PAHO in relation to the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease and the need to continue striving to protect disease-free areas. Several delegates noted the importance of PANAFTOSA in the strengthening of technical cooperation aimed at preventing and controlling zoonoses such as wildlife rabies, leishmaniasis, and hydatidosis. The PAHO/WHO Plan of Action for Technical Cooperation in Food Safety, 2006-2007, was also presented. Dr. Graciela Rosso, of the Secretariat for Health Programs within the Ministry of Health and Environment of Argentina, presented the report of COPAIA 4, which emphasized that food safety and security are essential to assure quality of life for the population and that both will contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

16. During the closing session, Dr. Javier Usabiaga Arroyo, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, and Fisheries of Mexico, expressed gratitude on behalf of the Government of Mexico to the ministers and delegates for their work during RIMSA 14. He stressed the importance of strengthening strategies for food safety and the impact of food safety on the health of consumers, protection of the environment, and the response to a globalized market. Dr. Julio Frenk, Secretary of Health of Mexico, extended his Government's thanks to the PASB, in the person of its Director, Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, for having honored Mexico by selecting it as the site for the 14th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture. He pointed out that, in the globalized world, sovereignty has very clearly demarcated boundaries and that there is therefore a need for international institutions that provide a forum in which countries can join forces, generate collective action, and pursue common objectives. Finally, Dr. Mirta Roses Periago thanked the Government of Mexico for the hospitality and facilities it had provided for RIMSA 14. She underscored the importance of intersectoral work, noting that it is already a reality in the Americas. She concluded her remarks by wishing success to the cooperation agencies represented at the meeting and urging the audience to continue working in a coordinated fashion.

17. RIMSA 14 adopted eight resolutions and one recommendation, which are annexed to the present report. In addition, it requested the Director of PASB to continue convening RIMSA and to invite the ministers of health and agriculture of Member States and other relevant stakeholders from the public and private sectors to examine and coordinate joint technical cooperation activities in areas of mutual interest.

18. It is proposed that an analysis be undertaken of the current availability and the prospects for mobilization of resources from the public and private sectors to support PASB's technical cooperation activities in veterinary public health, and that the issues of food safety, foot-and-mouth disease, and zoonoses be approached in an integrated manner in order to fulfill the resolutions and recommendations of RIMSA 14.

19. The Executive Committee analyzed the report (see Document CE136/13) and suggested that RIMSA should not be governed by the Rules of Procedure of the Directing Council of PAHO, that the structure of the meeting should be reviewed, and that guidelines and rules of procedure should be developed specifically for RIMSA with a view to fostering greater participation by other public and private stakeholders. The Committee asked the Secretariat to draw up a proposal to be presented to the Directing Council in 2006.



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**14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL  
LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE**

*Mexico City, D.F., Mexico, 21-22 April 2005*

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**FINAL REPORT**



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Annex

1. The 14th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA 14) was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico in Mexico City from 21 to 22 April 2005. The meeting was convened by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB), in compliance with Resolution CD17.R19, adopted by the 17th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in 1967, and Resolution CD43.R5 ratified by the 43rd Directing Council in 2001.

### **Officers**

2. The following officers of the Meeting were elected unanimously:

*President:* Mexico Dr. Julio Frenk, Secretary of Health and Dr. Javier Usabiaga, Secretary of Agriculture

*Vice Presidents:* Uruguay Dr. María Julia Muñoz, Minister of Public Health

Venezuela Ms. Betsaida Viáfara Rey, Director - Autonomous Agricultural and Livestock Health Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Land.

*Rapporteur:* Haiti Mr. Philippe Mathieu, Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Rural Development.

3. Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of PASB, served as Secretary ex officio of RIMSA 14, and Dr. Albino Belotto, Chief, Veterinary Public Health Unit, PASB, as Technical Secretary.

### **Participants**

#### ***Member States***

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

***Associated States***

5. Representatives of Puerto Rico attended the Meeting.

***Observer States***

6. Representatives of the Government of Spain attended the Meeting.

***Official Observers***

7. The Governments of Italy and Tunisia, and the European Union, attended as observers.

***Other Observers***

8. Participants from Sweden and the Republic of China (Taiwan) attended the Meeting as observers.

9. The United Nations and specialized agencies represented were: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLA), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the World Health Organization (WHO).

10. The intergovernmental organizations represented were: Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), International Office of Epizootics (OIE), Organization of American States (OAS), and Regional International Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA).

**Agenda and Program of Sessions**

11. The Agenda and Program of Sessions (Documents RIMSA14/1, Rev. 4 and RIMSA14/WP/1, Rev.3) were adopted without modification.

**Sessions**

12. An inaugural session and four plenary sessions were held.

### *Opening of the Session*

13. On behalf of the Host Country, Dr. Luis Ernesto Derbéz, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, welcomed the delegates and participants to RIMSA14. He underscored the political importance of this forum for the Americas – as the only one of its kind in the region to address animal health, agriculture, and human health, and said that his country was proud to host it.

14. The President of RIMSA13, Dr. Jaime Campos Quiroga, Minister of Agriculture of Chile, took the floor and underscored the importance of the RIMSA for the coordination of activities in the areas of food safety, emergent diseases, harmonization of regulations, and food security.

15. Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, Director General of IICA, pointed out the importance of the 2004 Declaration of Nuevo León, which places special emphasis on food security and rural development. He highlighted the five core points of the Declaration, all of which have a bearing on the RIMSA: competitiveness, interconnectivity, the environment, rural participation, and agribusiness.

16. Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, welcomed delegations and participants on behalf of PAHO. She said that the topic to be addressed at RIMSA14 was promotion of synergy between the health and agriculture sectors so as to optimize the use of human and financial resources in expediting the development process. She underscored the attendance at the Meeting of 33 ministers and vice ministers, accompanied by delegates from 36 Member States, who had gathered together to identify strategies and strengthen mechanisms focusing on the links between health and agriculture and rural development. She concluded by mentioning the significance of the fact that the Meeting was taking place in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas (Three Cultures Square), where ancient and modern Mexico converge, and said she hoped that this setting would inspire new ideas and initiatives on the subject of health and agriculture that would redound to the benefit of the peoples of the Americas.

17. His Excellency Vicente Fox, President of Mexico, delivered the inaugural address to the assembly. He began by emphasizing the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which had established that: “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services.” He stressed that health is one of the fundamental rights of human beings and that Health for All is therefore not just a target but also an obligation toward our fellow men and women; an obligation that can only be met through the broadest possible coordination. He highlighted the fact that the RIMSA has been the regional forum for cooperation and coordination in the area of health and agriculture, and other sectors. He said he was convinced that development is

the new name for peace; that international peace, health of the population, food, and security have a major impact on human development in our countries. He then declared the Meeting officially open.

### ***First Session***

18. During the first session, the Secretary of Health of Mexico, Dr. Julio Frenk, delivered his opening address on “25 years of the Declaration of Alma-Ata: Agriculture and Health Collaboration in Primary Health Care in the Americas: Experiences and New Perspectives.” He discussed the legacy of Alma-Ata, health as a social right, and institutional reform in Mexico. He referred to Primary Health Care (PHC) as a concrete, structured strategy, subject to critical evaluation. He pointed out that in 1983 Mexico had amended its Constitution to include the right to health protection, but that, since then, the world had changed substantially, with the consolidation of democracy, which must encompass social law and the effective exercise of social rights. He cited two instances in Mexico: food protection and the fight against tobacco use. He ended by saying that Alma-Ata had left a valuable legacy and that health continued to be a meeting point, uniting all nations on Earth.

19. The program of sessions was altered to enable Dr. Shigeru Omi, the World Health Organization’s Regional Director for the Western Pacific (WHO/WPRO), to deliver his special presentation on “Combining Human and Animal Health Expertise and Resources in the Global Response to New and Emerging Zoonoses (Avian Influenza and SARS)” (Document RIMSA14/24). Dr. Omi described the experience of Asian countries faced with outbreaks of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and avian influenza. He ended his presentation with a recommendation that the countries in the Americas make plans to deal with an influenza pandemic, including joint action by health and agriculture authorities.

20. Next to speak was Dr. Albino Belotto, Chief of the Veterinary Public Health Unit of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, who showed a video on “Agriculture and Health: Synergy for Local Development” illustrating the nature of the challenges facing the participants in RIMSA14, and then addressed the subject of Veterinary Public Health: Progress Report on Compliance of the Secretariat with the Mandates of the Governing Bodies of PAHO, 2004-2005 (Document RIMSA14/3). He highlighted the Unit’s intensified efforts to achieve effective integration of the public and private health and agriculture sectors and focused on the strengthening of national and regional policies in the areas of food safety, zoonoses, and foot-and-mouth disease in order to improve the living conditions of the population.

21. The Delegate of Argentina asked that one of the epidemiological maps presented, which indicated that in 2004 Argentina and Paraguay had been infected with foot-and-

mouth disease, be replaced with a map for 2005 showing that both countries are classified as disease-free with vaccination.

22. Dr. Eduardo Correa, Director of the Pan American Foot and Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), described the Plan of Action for PANAFTOSA, 2006-2007 (Document RIMSA14/4). He summarized the current status of the foot-and-mouth disease and zoonoses programs, pointing to their successes, as well as to some shortcomings in national programs, mainly with respect to epidemiological surveillance.

23. The Plan of Action for PANAFTOSA, 2006-2007, was adopted unanimously.

24. The report and resolutions adopted at the 10th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA 10) (Document RIMSA14/5) were presented by Dr. José Ángel del Valle Molina, Director General of Animal Health of the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food of Mexico (SAGARPA), Chair of COHEFA10. The Chair of COHEFA10 highlighted outstanding events, especially adoption of the Plan of Action, 2005-2009, of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA) and its immediate implementation. A prerequisite for that is prompt materialization of the Memorandum of Understanding between PAHO and the International Group for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (GIEFA).

25. Discussion then moved to items 6 and 7 on the Agenda, the Plan of Action for PANAFTOSA, 2006-2007 (Document RIMSA14/4), and the report and resolutions adopted at the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA 10) (Document RIMSA14/5).

26. Delegates recognized the work of PAHO/WHO in relation to the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease and the need to continue striving to protect disease-free areas and to achieve the goal of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease.

27. The delegates of Uruguay and Brazil highlighted experience acquired in their countries with efforts to provide coverage for small-scale producers and local areas, using a healthy and productive municipalities strategy, fostering development.

28. Several delegates raised the possibility of strengthening cooperation for the control, prevention, and, in some cases, the elimination of other zoonoses of importance for the region or some subregions, such as leishmaniasis, wildlife rabies, and trichinosis, and more robust efforts to eliminate hydatidosis.

29. The delegate of Chile emphasized the importance of establishing precise indicators in order to be able to evaluate the work and efforts undertaken to develop productive and healthy municipalities.

30. The delegate of Cuba supported the statement made by the Chilean delegate and described how important the development of productive and healthy municipalities had been for local development in his country. He said it was important to introduce surveillance systems to control and prevent endemic diseases, but also to minimize the risks of importing exotic agents, such as the virus associated with the avian influenza epidemic afflicting several Asian countries.

31. Next to speak was Dr. Genaro García, Regional Advisor on Food Safety at the Veterinary Public Health Unit of the PASB. He described the proposed PAHO/WHO plan of action for technical cooperation in food safety, 2006-2007 (Document RIMSA14/6). He began his presentation by explaining the current context of food safety in the Region, focusing in particular on the way in which foodborne diseases have a direct impact on health and an indirect impact on tourism and international trade. In presenting the technical cooperation plan, he explained that it is in line with the WHO's global strategy and with the Regional Food Safety Program. The idea of the plan is to reduce direct harm to health and the economic and social impact of diarrheal diseases caused by microbiological and chemical pollutants. The plan of action comprises three projects: evaluation, management, and communication of risks, with five expected outcomes.

32. Dr. Graciela Rosso, of the Secretariat for Health Programs of the Ministry of Health and Environment of Argentina, then took the floor. She pointed out that the provision of appropriate funding in coordination with specific international, national, and, above all, local plans of action was essential for advancing the goals of the regional food safety plan. She stressed that the policies pursued by multilateral organizations in that respect had to be clear and transparent, particularly given that the Member States of PAHO and the WHO have defined food safety as a priority global policy.

33. Dr. Rosso also presented the Report on the 4th Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA 4) (Document RIMSA14/7) with the conclusions and recommendations adopted by COPAIA 4. She emphasized that food security and safety were fundamental for the quality of life of the population and pointed out that both would contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially the reduction of poverty and hunger. Similarly, an intersectoral approach in food safety control programs would contribute to improved health, tourism, and trade in food products.

34. Before opening the first working session, the President of RIMSA13, Dr. Jaime Campos Quiroga, Minister of Agriculture of Chile, invited Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), to say a few words of welcome to participants.

### ***Second Session***

35. The second session consisted of a panel on the “Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger: Primary Health Care Strategies and Local Development.” The moderator for this panel was Dr. Satyadeow Sawh, Minister of Agriculture of Guyana.

36. The topic “Overview of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger with Reference to Latin America and the Caribbean” was introduced by Dr. Alicia Bárcena, Assistant Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), who pointed to the need to take into account the socioeconomic context in which efforts to achieve the MDGs are taking place, and the pressures exerted by globalization, high migration rates, and unstable economic growth in many countries in the Region. In her view, the greatest obstacle to achieving the goals of the Millennium Declaration in Latin America is regional inequity in income distribution.. She ended by saying that thought should be given to the possibility of setting more realistic goals for the region, which, in some cases, might even be more ambitious than those established under the Millennium Declaration. She added that agreements were needed on debt service reduction, along with stable social policies.

37. The presentation on the topic “Overview of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger with Reference to Latin America and the Caribbean” triggered extensive debate.

38. The delegate of Venezuela stated that, despite internal political problems in the years 2002 and 2003, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had restored sustained and sustainable economic growth. He said that providing primary care at the local level in the most vulnerable segments of the population throughout the country had been a priority and that support for that purpose had been received from the Government of Cuba. He also pointed out that through the Constitution adopted in 1999 and in accordance with the law, Venezuela had embarked on a program to make better use of its agricultural resources and to raise productivity, which had led to improved food security and safety.

39. The delegate of Cuba emphasized two points: first, that State support is essential, as is the participation of the community in the solution of priority problems; second, that



the goals of eliminating poverty and hunger in his country are analyzed on the basis of at-risk groups, so that they are in a position to say that hunger-related goals have been met. As regards poverty indicators, he said that the free services the Cuban population receives as a social benefit are usually not counted in income estimates. He also noted that health services in Cuba are completely free of charge.

40. The delegate of Argentina said that poverty indicators in his country had been adversely affected by the economic crisis in 2002. However, he pointed out that the Argentine economy had grown, as the economic analysis presented by ECLAC would show, and that this documented experience could serve as a reference for other countries that might undergo similar crises.

41. The delegate of Antigua and Barbuda referred to the high prices of oil and petroleum products and to how they affect small island states in particular. He suggested that there was a need for alternative technologies and practices for energy generation, such as solar and wind energy.

42. The delegate of Brazil welcomed the inclusion of this important topic on the agenda of RIMSA 14. He mentioned various Brazilian government programs aimed at attaining the MDGs, especially the elimination of hunger and poverty. He pointed to the difficulty of achieving the poverty and extreme poverty elimination goals, compared to the health goals. With respect to eradication of poverty, he said that there should be indicators that took account of the informal economy, not just the official GDP. As for health and hunger, he noted that his country has nationwide strategies, such as the “zero hunger program,” which is a combination of policies for channeling national income toward efforts to address the problem of hunger and malnutrition in its various manifestations, including obesity. However, he underscored the fact that, in addition to State policies, there should also be strategies that would facilitate sustainable local development in order to consolidate the empowerment of communities and thereby ensure their autonomous and sustainable development.

43. Responding to some of the concerns raised, the representative of ECLAC stated that the economic performance of Argentina and Venezuela did indeed differ from that of the other countries in the region, owing to the crises their delegates had described. Nevertheless, she acknowledged that their situation and indicators should be analyzed in conjunction with short-term economic and political developments. She also underscored the economic growth of both countries in the period from 2004 to April 2005. She highlighted the fact that Cuba is currently meeting the nutrition and hunger goals and is about to surpass them, particularly the indicator of 3,000 calories per capita per day. With respect to poverty in Cuba, ECLAC is completing a study carried out in coordination with the Cuban Secretariat of the Economy, with a view to comparing its findings with those of a study conducted three years ago. She underscored the comment made by the

Brazilian delegate on the importance of recognizing that while economic growth is a prerequisite for development, it is not in itself sufficient and therefore has to go hand in hand with a redistributive social policy coordinating economic and social factors. She highlighted several successful ECLAC projects in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico with regard to food and nutrition, which had entailed a direct transfer of resources to communities and which had had a genuinely positive impact on hunger and poverty indicators. Finally, she noted that ECLAC uses household surveys and acknowledged that there are indeed differences in the indicators used by the various institutions. For that reason, she suggested that it would be advisable to organize a meeting of those institutions, including multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other United Nations agencies, with an eye to establishing standardized evaluation indicators.

44. The subject of “Community Participation in the Food Production Chain and Food Safety” (Document RIMSA14/9), was introduced by Dr. Norman Jirón Romero, Director General of Accreditation and Regulation of the Ministry of Health of Nicaragua. He discussed the disadvantages of the classical model of work in the health sector, in which activities were carried out under programs within the structures of the sector’s institutions and consisted of more or less autonomous (vertical) operations, without any key roles for other players or the beneficiary populations. He compared that with the new model being applied in Nicaragua, in which activities encompass the whole of the health sector and are interconnected with all the stakeholders and sectors involved, in integrated (horizontal) operations, in which the beneficiary populations play a leading role.

45. The issue of “Appropriate Technology – Small Producers and Food Security” (Document RIMSA14/10), was presented by Mr. Víctor Gabriel Barrios, Minister of Matters regarding Farmworkers, Agriculture and Livestock, who focused on the main indicators of poverty, especially that found in rural areas. To address it, the Government is promoting efforts to forge the National Strategy for Agricultural, Livestock, and Rural Development (ENDAR). It comprises a diagnostic assessment of the sector and prioritizes seven policy lines, the most noteworthy being: the development of productive communities and markets, food security, and the construction and improvement of infrastructure.

46. The topic “Intersectoral Collaboration for the Promotion of Agriculture and Livestock Production and Human Development” (Document RIMSA14/11), was presented by Dr. Francisco Muzio Lladó, Director General of Livestock Services in Uruguay’s Ministry of Livestock Production, Agriculture, and Fisheries, the economy, output indicators, gross domestic product, and the human development index, providing both historical and current statistics. He stressed that technical cooperation to strengthen local development had to incorporate the following: funding, dissemination of

information, training, development of plans and guidelines, promotion, and direct technical assistance.

47. The subject of “Special Support to Small Island States in Capacity-building for Food Safety and International Trade” (Document RIMSA14/12) was presented by Dr. Richard Harrison, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture of Jamaica. He discussed the geopolitical situation in the Caribbean, focusing in particular on progress toward attaining the MDGs. The impact of globalization on the region – a net importer of foods – poses two major challenges: the need to raise output and to make the adjustments needed to comply with new regulations that would enable the region to address its trade deficit. He concluded that globalization, free trade, and the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPMs) must be regarded as an inherent part of international trade today and as challenges to be taken up, by consolidating and developing the region’s resources. Nevertheless, the adjustments induced by globalization had triggered a major effort with respect to food safety and there was a certain amount of optimism regarding progress toward the attainment of the MDGs.

48. Dr. Josette Bijou, Minister of Health and Population of Haiti, aired a video on the elimination of human rabies in Latin America and presented the document on the subject, describing the current status. (Documents RIMSA14/13 and RIMSA14/INF/1). She urged the Member States to reaffirm the international commitment to lend priority support to countries with cases of human and canine rabies and to the elimination of the disease.

49. Several delegates underscored efforts to control human rabies transmitted by dogs, which had resulted in a substantial reduction in the number of cases of both human and canine rabies. They also paid tribute to PAHO’s work in providing technical support to countries and highlighted the initiative of reviewing the regional program and preparing a plan of action for the prevention and control of rabies in the Americas in 2005-2009—a move that would undoubtedly facilitate greater coordination of actions at the national and regional level.

50. The delegate of the United States underscored the need to strengthen cooperation aimed at acquiring a better grasp of the epidemiology of wildlife rabies, its reservoirs and distribution, and at evaluating control strategies, such as the use of oral vaccines.

51. The delegate of Bolivia described the dog-transmitted human rabies program in his country. He thanked neighboring countries for donating antirabies vaccines for use with dogs and humans. He said the program was based on four core strategies: communication and education of the population, vaccination of dogs, care for people exposed to the risk of rabies, and control of the stray canine population.

52. The delegate of Brazil indicated the existence of endemic canine rabies – especially in puppies – in the northern and north-eastern parts of his country. Given this epidemiological finding, he said that decentralization measures were being taken to improve surveillance, diagnosis, and the care of people in high-risk areas. He also pointed to the existence of bat-transmitted rabies in domestic animals, with sporadic outbreaks of rabies in human populations in high-risk areas. He concluded by saying that ministries of health and agriculture needed to coordinate activities with the productive sector to improve surveillance and control of bat-transmitted human rabies and to minimize its impacts on livestock.

53. The delegate of Uruguay said there was no rabies in her country. She emphasized the need to boost surveillance to prevent it from occurring and to study the presence of the virus in the chiropteran (bat) population.

### ***Third Session***

54. The third session consisted of a panel discussion on international cooperation on emerging issues in agriculture, livestock production, and health, moderated by Mr. Roberto Rodrigues, Minister of Agriculture of Brazil.

55. The topic entitled “Current Situation of New and Emerging Animal Diseases—the International Zoosanitary Code as Basis for Policy and Trade” (Document RIMSA14/14), was introduced by Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of the World Organization for Animal Health (formerly Office International des Epizooties – OIE). He presented guidelines for policy and technical decision-making in the fields of animal and public health. With respect to food security, he emphasized that the guidelines for risk reduction prior to harvesting and in the primary processing of produce encompass all farm-level measures so as to minimize risks in the end product.

56. Following Dr. Vallat’s presentation, delegates of the United States and Canada took the floor to say that they both considered it ill-advised to re-open discussion of Article 12 of the International Health Regulations, as it had been extensively debated by Member States of the WHO. The delegate of the United States emphasized that he made that suggestion without the background information of Dr. Vallat’s presentation. He also pointed out that it was his country that had proposed mentioning the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) in Article 12 and that during the discussions an agreement had been reached to mention it. He added that in his opinion it was clear that the WHO cooperated with other relevant organizations on international public health matters. He ended by saying he thought it inappropriate for a body such as RIMSA to intervene in the discussion, but that his delegation was prepared to reopen the debate, if it was deemed necessary, at the next World Health Assembly in May 2005.

57. The delegations of Cuba and Ecuador said that they agreed with Dr. Vallat's suggestion of mentioning institutions such as the OIE and the FAO, and other agencies working in the field of human and animal health in the International Health Regulations. All the delegates who took the floor mentioned the need to coordinate cooperation activities among the different international agencies in order to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency and impact.

58. The delegate of Canada said she welcomed the fact that the OIE had opted to reduce from five to three the criteria for classifying countries with regard to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), as well as the proposal—to be discussed at the next OIE Meeting in May 2005—to include skeletal muscle tissue, blood, and bovine byproducts in the category of minimum-risk products not requiring additional certification.

59. Dr. Vallat replied to the comments and questions, acknowledging that the United States was indeed one of the few countries to propose including the OIE and other international public-health-related organizations in the International Health Regulations. As to BSE, he said that the proposal described by the delegate of Canada would certainly be considered at the next OIE Meeting in May 2005.

60. The topic "Initiatives for Food Security, Food Safety and Trans-border Animal Diseases" (Document RIMSA14/15) was presented by Dr. Moisés Vargas Terán of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). He described the FAO's mandate with respect to nutrition and the world population. He stressed that hunger is both morally and economically objectionable, since it produces not only sick people but also workers and students with low productivity.

61. Several delegations again emphasized the need to coordinate technical cooperation among international organizations. The delegate of Venezuela, on behalf of his country, specifically asked the FAO for technical cooperation assistance in implementing sound agricultural practices in the primary sector of the food chain, a request welcomed by the representative of the FAO.

62. The topic "Public and Private Sector Roles of Agriculture and Health in Eradicating Hunger and Extreme Poverty in Rural Areas—Mobilizing International Cooperation" (Document RIMSA14/16) was introduced by Dr. Jaime Alfonso Campos Quiroga, Minister of Agriculture of Chile. He underscored the persistence and increased severity of poverty, hunger, and extreme poverty, despite the surplus of food in the world. He said this was a well-known fact and that what remained to be done was to identify the procedures for transforming that reality. He suggested, as an example, that suspending subsidies for farmers one day a week could make a difference. He then described policy

measures in Chile that have contributed to the growth of agricultural and livestock production, to containment of migration from the countryside to cities, and to a higher standard of living for the rural population.

63. The presentation by the Minister of Agriculture of Chile was warmly welcomed by several delegations, which expressed their appreciation for his account of Chile's experience.

64. The delegate of Guyana said that the Minister of Agriculture of Chile had raised some considerations that were relevant for the panel as a whole and noted that he had said: "We understand the problem of hunger; we know what we have to do and how to arrive at concrete solutions." He had also emphasized the true fact that there is enough food to feed the world population and yet it is known that every night 18 million people in the world go to bed hungry and with no food.

65. Several delegates referred to the need to focus on the disadvantages of subsidies for agricultural products in developed countries, which constituted a handicap for developing countries with agricultural potential and encouraged migration to the cities, thereby generating unfavorable conditions for harmonious and sustained development and social peace.

66. The Minister of Agriculture of Chile thanked the delegates for their comments and emphasized that that was the path Chile had embarked upon. He pointed out that Chilean policy on the matter was founded on the question: How can the State help generate the conditions that enable the population and agriculture to contribute to the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty? In other words: "How can the potential of the agricultural sector be better utilized to enable the State to contribute more efficiently and effectively to the development of the population? The Minister concluded by listing the three conditions that, in his opinion, are necessary for progress along these lines: (a) linking health and food security and safety issues in order to meet the requirements for public health and trade in agricultural products; (b) the emergence of market economies in a globalized and competitive world; and (c) recognition of the importance of these issues, which has led some countries to establish ministries of food, or food security agencies to address national, subregional, and global challenges.

67. The topic "Inter-Country Cooperation in the International Food Trade—Implications for Health and Development" (Document RIMSA14/17) was presented by Mr. Oscar Manuel Gutiérrez Rosales, Executive Director of the Regional International Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA). He stressed that cooperation opens up fresh opportunities. He developed three themes: a) policy decisions and the need for country coordination and integration; b) the relationship between the agricultural and livestock industry and food safety; and c) progress so far and its implications for health

and agricultural development. Finally, he recommended coordination of the efforts of all sectors and cooperation institutions to harmonize the standards needed to comply with the established Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).

68. Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, Director of PASB, presented the topic “Attention to Neglected Diseases with Emphasis on Zoonoses in Vulnerable Populations” (Document RIMSA14/18). She said that in the developing world a number of communicable diseases, many of which are zoonoses, tend to be outside the scope of the health sector, despite the heavy burden they impose on people living in poverty. These neglected diseases pose a major challenge with regard to meeting the MDGs. She emphasized the need to form partnerships with other sectors capable of adopting effective measures, especially the agricultural, environmental, and educational sectors, to reduce and control neglected zoonoses effectively. Such diseases are also socioeconomic indicators of poverty and of skewed income distribution which affect the most vulnerable segments of the population. Poverty is the main extrinsic factor explaining the existence of these diseases and PAHO regards them as a social, economic, and health issue.

69. Several delegates expressed their appreciation of the presentation delivered by Dr. Roses, Director of the PASB.

70. The delegate of Argentina stated that the area of zoonoses was one to which countries have not paid enough attention. The vertical strategies in health programs have eroded the holistic and integral concept of health. Thus, with zoonoses, as with many health issues, it is necessary to consider not just the diseases themselves, but also the environmental, social, and economic context as determinants of the health status of the population. She suggested that the next RIMSA should include an examination of environmental issues, considering the importance of the environmental changes occurring at the local, regional, and global level.

71. The topic “Central American Regional Cooperation in Health and Agriculture – The Catalytic Role of Specialized Regional Agencies” (Document RIMSA14/25) was presented by Mr. Bernardo López, Vice Minister of Agriculture of Guatemala, who described the current status of the intersectoral agenda and cooperation among regional agencies, especially the Central American strategy for integrated management of water resources, food and nutrition security, modified living organisms and agricultural biotechnology, reduction of vulnerability to natural hazards, and safe management of hazardous chemical substances. He concluded by saying that the current legal framework of the Central American Integration System facilitated intersectoral treatment of issues, and that that had given rise to a concerted, active agenda for regional work among the health, agriculture, and environment sectors.

72. This session ended with comments by the Minister of Agriculture of Brazil, the panel moderator, who asserted that globalization has had both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, he underscored the increased trade in goods and services, and hence higher output and more wealth in the world. He said the negative effects included greater social exclusion and ever-increasing concentration of global wealth. He emphasized that these were the two sides to the same coin. Exclusion and concentration are, he said, intrinsically negative, but exclusion is growing at such an alarming pace that it is also becoming a threat to social peace and to democracies throughout the world. Thus, one of the greatest challenges facing humanity in the 21st century is to narrow the gap between the poor and the rich, globally and within each country. The liberalization of trade in agricultural and livestock products – not as a favor, not as a handout, but as a right and a necessity – should be considered as a fundamental strategy for achieving peace and the development of peoples. He concluded with the following message: “We all agree that a fundamental step to be taken to achieve the Millennium Development Goals is redistribution of income. However, everyone also thinks that it’s other people’s income, not their own, that should be redistributed, and that is the other side of the coin I referred to earlier. I think we must take concrete steps to diminish the gap between rich and poor, and through such actions, defend democracy and world peace, and, hence, people’s happiness, because, although it seems a romantic notion, without peace and without democracy, there can be no happiness.”

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

73. The fourth session included the panel discussion on “Summits Mandates—Advancing Human Security through Innovative Approaches Centered on Local Development.” Dr. Peter Fernández, Associate Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (APHIS/USDA), was the moderator. He highlighted the objectives of the Summits in Miami, Santiago, and Quebec City, which are all geared to sustainable development and social inclusion. He added that the next Summit would emphasize employment generation and local governance.

74. The topic “Financial Facilities to Support the Regional Summits Mandates on Agriculture and Health” (Document RIMSA14/19) was introduced by Dr. Gabriel Montes Llamas of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). He said that the Bank had actively supported the resolutions of the Presidential Summits, despite the complexity of their agendas. He then reviewed the principal commitments in some detail, especially those relating to poverty eradication, education, the involvement of women and indigenous groups, the enhancement of rural life, environmental protection, and access to medical services, among others. He concluded that it would be necessary to integrate these projects as there are no isolated solutions for the various problems. During



his presentation, he provided information on the allocation of funds for the IDB's portfolio of social development projects.

75. The topic "Agricultural Health and Sustainable Rural Development" (Document RIMSA14/20) was presented by Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture, (IICA). He referred to the Quebec City Summit of 2001, which had underscored the importance of agricultural health and of food safety, as key factors for countries' competitiveness in international markets. He said that was why it was important to establish coordinated plans for improving health and food safety services.

76. The topic "Agricultural and Livestock Policy, Science and Technology Applied to the Food Chain" (Document RIMSA14/21) was presented by Dr. João Carlos de Souza Meirelles, Secretary of State for Science and Technology of São Paulo, Brazil. He discussed the history of agroindustry in Brazil, the incorporation of new technologies, and its high levels of competitiveness and excellence. He emphasized that, in the face of growing interdependence of production chains – for instance the soybean, sugar, and meat chains – coordinated actions by the different sectors and stakeholders were needed to apply risk analysis methods and achieve efficient management in all the countries of the Americas. He recommended evaluating practices in each country in order to be able to draw up effective strategies for implementing food safety and quality management procedures, with the coordination and support of PAHO. Finally, he said political decisions were needed to facilitate and expedite the goal of achieving a healthy and competitive America.

77. The topic entitled "Empowering and Expanding the Role of Women in Food Security and Local Development" (Document RIMSA14/22) was introduced by Dr. Susana Malcorra, Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Program (WFP). She stressed the role that women play in feeding their families and highlighted the fact that women and children are hardest hit by poverty and the lack of food security, noting that they are priorities for the WFP. She recommended providing holistic technical support for the development of women as central to food security for their families and the community.

78. Due to inescapable last-minute commitments, Dr. Pilar Mazzetti Soler, Minister of Health of Peru was unable to attend. The panel moderator referred delegates to Document RIMSA14/23, "Roles of Local Organizations and Indigenous Communities as Agents for the Mobilization of Basic Community Services," prepared by Dr. Mazzetti.

79. The topic "Rural Poverty – Health and Lifestyle" (Document RIMSA14/26) was introduced by Dr. Trevor A. Hassell, President of the Inter-American Heart Foundation. He gave a brief overview of the Foundation, which comprises 36 organizations in 19

countries. Its objective is to highlight the importance of cardiac diseases and the advances achieved in preventing and treating them. He concluded by recommending that governments implement health promotion activities that address every facet of the problem, strengthen coordination among national and regional organizations, and encourage the food industry to produce safe and nutritious foods, in particular products containing less fat.

80. The delegate of Brazil pointed out the need to encourage private sector investment in rural development and suggested that the next RIMSA – if possible in conjunction with the OIE and other international organizations – include presentations on experiences with strengthening economic and health risk analysis for the establishment of public and private investment priorities.

81. Several delegations took the floor to congratulate the organizers of RIMSA14 on having included the subject of empowerment of women in the discussion of the mandates arising out of the various Summits of the Americas.

82. The delegate of the Dominican Republic said that his country was fostering the establishment of small livestock units as a way to provide women with an alternative source of food and income.

83. The delegate of Chile agreed on the importance of including the topic of women, who are a key resource for development. He said that in his country many women work as day laborers in the fields and are exposed to occupational hazards such as the pesticides used in agriculture, which in addition to their acute effects can also cause a series of chronic ailments, including congenital disorders. He recommended that this issue should receive more attention and added that his country has some experience in complementing rural sector investments with social services for the rural population.

84. The delegate of Venezuela shared some thoughts about the presentation delivered by the IDB representative. He said that, following the Second World War, Latin American countries had homogeneously implemented a development model based on the green revolution. However, among other shortcomings, that model did not take into account the agricultural, ecological, and cultural diversity of peoples of the Region. It had translated into promotion of single-crop agriculture, which had had a devastating effect on the environment. The model was not accompanied by other basic and essential actions with respect to: (a) land ownership; (b) training and appropriate technology; (c) timely and sufficient financial and technical resources; (d) the absence of a State policy to ensure that rural populations, small producers, and indigenous populations had access to markets. As a result, this model had failed. The delegate also referred to the free trade proposal and the impossibility of the most vulnerable developing countries competing

with the rich countries, where, as had been noted repeatedly during RIMSA 14, agricultural subsidies and other protectionist measures impede access to their markets.

85. The representative of the IDB took the floor to point out that in fact several different rural development models have been applied in Latin America, including: research and extension, the agrarian reform of the 1960s, and an integrated development model. Some of these models made useful contributions, others not. He acknowledged that one of the factors associated with their failure had been government subsidies. Such subsidies usually ended up benefiting big producers and agricultural companies. He speculated that outcomes might have been different had those resources been invested in research, extension, training, and, in general, goods and basic services to meet the needs of small producers.

86. The moderator, Dr. Peter Fernández, concluded by thanking the panelists and delegations for their remarks.

87. During the debate and adoption of the draft resolutions of RIMSA14, consideration was given a the recommendation regarding the draft International Health Regulations (IHR) to be presented to the next World Health Assembly in Geneva, in May. It was recommended that explicit reference be made to collaboration and cooperation among WHO, FAO, OIE, and other agencies working in the field of human and animal health. This recommendation was not supported by the delegation of the United States of America.

### ***Closing Session***

88. In this closing session, Dr. Javier Usabiaga Arroyo, Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development and Fisheries of Mexico (SAGARPA) drew attention to the resolutions of the Meeting that had to do with strengthening food safety strategies in terms of their impact on consumers' health, protection of the environment, and the response to the globalized market. He noted the regulatory efforts of governments, as well as constraints relation to difficulties in institutional spheres of competence. He underscored the efforts and innovative experiments in Europe with food security agencies and similar initiatives in Canada and the United States, which involved merging bodies specializing in food safety. He outlined the work being done in Mexico on legal, information, and consumer guidance issues in connection with food chains. He concluded his remarks by saying that the outcomes of RIMSA 14 would help enhance the country's and the region's efforts to protect the health of consumers (Document RIMSA14/27).

89. The Secretary of Health of Mexico, Dr. Julio Frenk, thanked PAHO in the person of its Director, Dr. Mirta Roses, for having honored Mexico by selecting it as the venue for RIMSA14 and again thanked the ministers of health and agriculture, the heads of

delegations, and the representatives of international organizations who had participated in the meeting. He pointed out that, in the current globalized world, sovereignty has very clearly demarcated boundaries and that there is therefore a need for international institutions that provide a forum in which countries can join forces, generate collective action, and pursue common objectives.

90. Dr. Mirta Roses thanked the Government of Mexico for the hospitality and facilities it had provided for the Meeting. She underscored the outstanding participation by those who had attended the Meeting, and the mature manner in which issues had been addressed, noting that both of those features of the Meeting had been facilitated by the excellent organization framework. She thanked the staff of the office of President Fox, the staff of the three Secretariats of State, and the staff of the PAHO/WHO office in Mexico for their contributions to the success of the Meeting. She concluded her remarks by pointing to the progress made in cooperation in the field of veterinary public health and the new commitments and ways of addressing them. She once again thanked the Government of Mexico and wished all participants a safe and enjoyable journey home.

## **Resolutions**

91. RIMSA 14 adopted the following 8 resolutions:

### **RIMSA14.R1            *Hemispheric Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease***

#### ***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Taking into consideration the Houston Declaration, agreed upon at the Hemispheric Conference on the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease held in Houston, Texas on 3 to 4 March 2004 (Document RIMSA14/INF/2);

Having examined the report of the 10th Meeting of the Hemispheric Committee for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (COHEFA10) (Document RIMSA14/5), especially in relation to the Plan of Action 2005-2009 of the Hemispheric Plan for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA), prepared by the Interamerican Group for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (GIEFA) in conjunction with the Animal Health Services and the private sectors of the countries of the Region; and

Bearing in mind the significant progress achieved in the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the countries of South America, and its prevention in the disease free countries of North and Central America and the Caribbean, within the framework of the Hemispheric Program for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PHEFA),

implemented with the technical cooperation of the Pan American Health Organization, through PANAFTOSA, as well as the identification of critical areas of disease persistence in the Region.

### ***RESOLVES***

1. To congratulate to the countries of the Region by the advances obtained in the eradication of the foot-and-mouth disease, as well as by the preservation of the free areas in the Hemispheric.
2. To endorse the conclusions and recommendations of COHEFA10, in particular the Plan of Action 2005-2009 of PHEFA.
3. To urge to persists to increase its efforts to obtain its elimination in the established terms in the countries where still the presence of eradication of foot-and-mouth disease,
4. To urge the Member States to renew their political resolve and meet their financial commitments, both public and private, to rich the goals of the Plan of Action mention above.
5. To congratulate to the Inter-American Group for the eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (GIEFA), to the veterinary services, the private sector of the Region and to the international organizations for their work, and to urge them to continue their effort on the application and execution of the referred Plan.

(Fourth meeting, 22 April 2005)

**RIMSA 14.R2**      ***4th Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA 4)***

### ***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Having studied the report of the 4th Meeting of the Pan American Commission for Food Safety (COPAIA 4) (Document RIMSA14/7);

Bearing in mind the need to accelerate execution of the Strategic Plan for Food Protection endorsed by the Governing Bodies of PAHO;

Recognizing the importance of the joint activities of PAHO and WHO for collaboration in the area of food safety, for example the Healthy Markets Initiative, the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), and the endorsement of the manual on five keys to safer food;

Recognizing that food security and food safety are fundamental for assuring the quality of life of the population in accordance with the basic principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations; and that they both contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, especially aimed at reducing hunger and poverty, diminishing the impact of infant morbidity and mortality, and promoting sustainable development; and

Cognizant of the need to strengthen protection of the food supply at the local level,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To endorse the conclusions, recommendations, and agreements of COPAIA 4; in particular, to establish under the leadership of PAHO:
  - (a) a self-evaluation system for food safety programs at the country level;
  - (b) effective intervention projects throughout the food chain for the production of safe food, using evidence-based scientific analysis;
  - (c) local food safety programs, through the Healthy and Productive Municipios initiatives, and
  - (d) programs for monitoring food and for epidemiological surveillance of foodborne diseases, with effective laboratory involvement.
2. To urge the Member States to offer political and financial support for implementation of the COPAIA 4 recommendations.
3. To encourage the countries of the Region of the Americas to institute a Healthy Food Day, as Uruguay has done.
4. To propose at the next World Health Assembly that food safety be considered as the theme for World Health Day.
5. To call on the ministers of agriculture, livestock, and health to reaffirm their commitment to intersectoral action in matters related to food safety in order to reduce risks for human health, tourism and the food trade.
6. To request the Director to intensify technical cooperation in food safety, specifically at the local level, as part of the productive and healthy communities approaches.

*(Fourth session, 22 April 2005)*

**RIMSA14.R3**            *Elimination of Human Rabies*

***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON  
HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Having studied the progress made in the programs for the elimination of rabies transmitted by dogs in Latin America (Documents RIMSA14/13 and RIMSA14/INF/1);

Having received the report and recommendations of the 10th Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs in Latin America (REDIPRA10) (Document RIMSA14/INF/1);

Bearing in mind resolution RIMSA3.R18, which established the Regional Program for the Elimination of Urban Rabies in Latin America in 1983; and

Mindful of the mandate of resolution RIMSA13.R3, in which the Director is requested to review and strengthen technical cooperation with the Member States to consolidate the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs, while at the same time promoting surveillance and control of rabies in wildlife,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge the Member States to:
  - (a) reaffirm their political commitments to ensure that sufficient financial support is available to consolidate the final phase in the elimination of human rabies transmitted by dogs in Latin America;
  - (b) reaffirm the international commitment to give priority support to countries with cases of human and canine rabies to achieve its elimination;
  - (c) identify resources to help reinforce activities in the areas of surveillance, epidemiological characterization, and control of rabies in wildlife;
  - (d) organize local measures to prevent the reintroduction of rabies transmitted by dogs in localities and areas that are disease-free, and strengthen the role of municipal governments in controlling stray dogs; and
  - (e) improve canine rabies control legislation with regard to reporting of the disease, the vaccination of dogs, and control of the canine population.

2. To endorse the conclusions and recommendations of the 10th Meeting of Directors of National Rabies Control Programs of Latin America (REDIPRA10), especially the request that the Director:
  - (a) prepare the corresponding Plan of Action for 2005-2009;
  - (b) invite representatives of the agriculture and livestock sector to future REDIPRA meetings to guarantee the intersectoral coordination essential for the identification, diagnosis, and rapid response to outbreaks of rabies in wildlife, and
  - (c) improve educational activities directed to humane societies and the general public, with a view to maintaining the gains achieved and moving toward the eradication of human rabies transmitted by domestic animals--activities such as responsible pet ownership and care, vaccination, and other preventive activities.

*(Fourth session, 22 April 2005)*

**RIMSA14.R4      *The Global Risk of New and Emerging Zoonoses***

***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Having reviewed the special presentation on the convergence of expertise and resources in human and animal health in the global response to new and emerging animal diseases, avian influenza, and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (Document RIMSA14/14);

Bearing in mind that emerging zoonoses probably persist because of the greater interaction between human beings and animals, the increased production of food derived from animals, changes in food production and food preparation methods, and the invasion of jungle animal habitats by human populations; and

Aware of the health risks caused by increased trade and the global transportation of animals and animal products,

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge the Member States to:
  - (a) review their policies and reinforce their strategies to respond to new and emerging zoonoses, promoting their speedy identification and confirmation, official notification, and containment;



- (b) use the International Zoosanitary Code and International Health Regulations as the basis for their policies on animal diseases and human health, respectively;
- (c) promote the coordinated mobilization and deployment of veterinary and human medical services for the adoption of prevention and control measures, especially at the local level, and the strengthening of national zoonosis control programs;
- (d) consider Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS) and forgotten or uncontrolled zoonoses that constitute important health risks in the Member States, such as Chagas' disease in several countries, priorities in the Region; and
- (e) ensure that subregional cooperation strategies for addressing these problems are maintained, especially the Southern Cone Project for the Control and Surveillance of Hydatidosis.

2. To request the Director to examine and strengthen technical cooperation with the Member States in the formulation of a plan of action and mobilization of the respective resources for an effective regional, national, and local effective response to emerging zoonoses that constitute a global threat.

3. To emphatically urge the international organizations responsible for animal and human health, such as the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the World Health Organization (WHO), to ensure the coordination of their mandates and the pooling of resources to offer a uniform, coherent response to the threat of new and emerging zoonoses.

*(Fourth session, 22 April 2005)*

**RIMSA14.R5      *Agriculture and Health Synergy: Food Security and Local Development***

***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Taking into account the topics and issues addressed by the panels on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty: (as agreed internationally and contained in the Millennium Declaration): Primary Health Care Strategies and Local Development (Documents RIMSA14/8, RIMSA14/9, RIMSA14/10, RIMSA14/11 and RIMSA14/12), and International Cooperation on Emerging Issues in Agriculture and Health (Documents RIMSA14/14, RIMSA14/15, RIMSA14/16, RIMSA14/17, and RIMSA14/18);

Recognizing agriculture and health synergy for local development in the fight against hunger and poverty (Document RIMSA14/24); and

Bearing in mind the mandates of Resolutions RIMSA8.R10, RIMSA9.R9 and RIMSA11.R11 regarding the special support to the small island states of the Caribbean.

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge Member States to:
  - (a) promote the mobilization of the public and private sector resources in providing services in the prevention and control of the neglected zoonoses, which affect the predominantly poor populations;
  - (b) work together, especially with small island states, in developing models based on the successful experience of productive municipalities to promote food security and safety at the local level;
2. To request PAHO and other international or bilateral organizations and various funding agencies to provide special assistance towards:
  - (a) developing comprehensive approaches for the prevention and control of the neglected zoonoses particularly in local endemic areas, within the framework of rural development projects, and
  - (b) infrastructure development in the small island states of the Caribbean to comply with international standards for food safety and trade.

*(Fourth meeting, 22 April 2005)*

**RIMSA14.R6      *Advancing Food Security and Local Development through Innovative Approaches***

***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Having analyzed the topics and issues addressed by the panel on Summit Mandates —Advancing Human Security through Innovative Approaches Centered on Human Development (Documents RIMSA14/19, RIMSA14/20, RIMSA14/21, RIMSA14/22, and RIMSA14/23);

Bearing in mind the mandates of the Governing Bodies of PAHO regarding “Women, Health and Development” (Resolution CSP26.R21) and “the Health of the Indigenous Peoples Initiative” (Resolution CD37.R5) (Documents RIMSA14/INF/4 and RIMSA14/INF/5);

Taking into consideration the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to promote gender equality and empower women, as agreed internationally and contained in the Millennium Declaration;

Conscious of the alliance for competitiveness of agriculture, science and technology in promoting greater productivity and access to food availability, and

Considering the importance of promoting the local development to assure a healthy way of life in the rural communities (Document RIMSA14/26).

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge Member States to:
  - (a.) develop the necessary local framework to promote and mobilize a higher mainstream participation of indigenous populations and women organizations to ensure access to safe food and basic community services;
  - (b.) ensure the State’s obligation to protect access to productive resources and affordable financing, to enable women and indigenous rural populations to achieve selfreliance to feed themselves, and maximize rural contribution to national development, and
  - (c.) promote policy and mechanisms to narrow the technological divide, improve productivity, increase access, and promote trade along the food chain involving producers, processors, packers, distributors, and consumers.
  
1. To request PAHO to sustain its support and commitment in assisting Member States’ compliance to Summits and PAHO mandates, using innovative approaches in the agriculture and health sectors, regarding women empowerment in local development, food security and indigenous people involvement.

*(Fourth meeting, 22 April 2005)*

**RIMSA14.R7            *Resources for the Plan of Action on food safety***

***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Considering, the document RIMSA14/6 “PAHO/WHO Proposed Plan of Action for Technical Cooperation in Food Safety, 2006-2007” and the report of 4th Meeting of the Pan American Commission of Food Safety (COPAIA4);

Bearing in mind that the aforementioned plan establishes expected results and indicators, with respect to the cooperation resources of the Member States and PAHO;

Aware that food safety is one of the 10 priority areas of cooperation approved by the last World Health Assembly, held in 2004, and

Concerned that budgetary and financing constraints have been detected that could hinder achievement of the proposed goals.

***RESOLVES:***

1. To urge the Member States to:
  - (a) present the document RIMSA14/6 as a frame of reference to regional and international cooperation agencies, subregional common markets, and multilateral and other donor agencies for the implementation of the aforementioned plan;
  - (b) include universities and research and academic training centers in the design and execution of projects, and
  - (c) present submit to the World Health Assembly in May 2005 the concerns of the countries of the Region of the Americas about financing the activities included in the RIMSA14 mandates on food safety.
2. To request the Director to:
  - (a) facilitate internal coordination of PAHO resources for cooperation in food safety;
  - (b) promote, together with other regional and international cooperation agencies the mobilization of external resources through support for the preparation of specific priority projects, and
  - (c) submit these projects, in coordination with the countries, for the consideration of the regional and subregional economic forums as the North American Free Trade

Agreement (NAFTA), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), General Secretary of the Central American Integration System (SICA), the South Common Trade (Mercosur) and others.

*(Fourth meeting, 22 April 2005)*

**RIMSA14.R8**            *Expression of Appreciation to the Government of Mexico*

***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE,***

Mindful of the offer of the Government of the United States of Mexico to serve as the venue of the 14<sup>th</sup> Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA14);

Recognizing the high level of organization and logistical support provided by the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE), the Secretariat of Health (SSA), and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) of the Government of Mexico;

Honored by the presence of the President of the United States of Mexico, His Excellency Mr. Vicente Fox;

Conscious of the successful results of the Meeting, which elevated and further cemented the convergence of the agriculture and health sectors towards advancing local development and food security for the people of the Americas, and

Moved by the hospitality and attention received by the delegates and participants,

***RESOLVES:***

2. To unanimously express sincere appreciation and profound gratitude to the authorities of the United States of Mexico, headed by His Excellency, the President of Mexico, and the Secretaries of Foreign Affairs, Health, and Agriculture.

*(Fourth meeting, 22 April 2005)*

**RIMSA14:**            ***RECOMMENDATION: Collaboration between Public Health and Animal Health Authorities***

Considering that in the objectives of the RIMSA14 Meetings, the importance of the collaborative work of Ministers of Health and Agriculture was underlined, that:

- (a) of all human pathogens, 60% are zoonotic; 75% of emerging human diseases are animal borne; 80% of all pathogens that could be utilized by bioterrorism are also animal borne;
- (b) the World Health Organization (WHO) is preparing the new International Health Regulations (IHRs) that will be presented for adoption by the World Health Assembly in May of this year;
- (c) in text of the proposed IHR revision, it is very important to reflect upon the importance of collaborative work that Public Health and Veterinary Services carry out in preventing, controlling, and eradicating zoonoses; and
- (d) the IHR proposal should also take into account the importance of collaborative work carried out at global level by the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WHO, through the *Codex Alimentarius*.

***THE 14th INTER-AMERICAN MEETING, AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL, ON HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE RECOMMENDS:***

That in the IHR revision to be considered at the World Health Assembly in May, that ministers of health make formal reference to collaboration and coordination with OIE, FAO, and other organizations and agencies working in this field.

*(Fourth meeting, 22 April 2005)*

Note: The United States dissociates itself from this recommendation.

Annex

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