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**PRESENTATION OF THE 2026 ANNUAL REPORT,
DR. JARBAS BARBOSA DA SILVA JR., DIRECTOR OF THE PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU**

28 September 2026

Distinguished Ministers, delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen:

It is my privilege to present the Annual Report of the Director covering the period from July 2025 through June 2026.

This report demonstrates that our Member States achieved meaningful health gains across the Americas despite a complex public health environment and increased financial constraints. Through the technical cooperation of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), innovation, and regional collaboration, countries and territories strengthened primary health care, expanded access to health services, enhanced health security, and reinforced the systems and capacities needed to improve long-term health outcomes.

Countries and territories achieved important disease elimination milestones. Bahamas and Brazil were validated as having eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Turks and Caicos received certification for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and became the first territory in the Americas to validate the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B. Chile became the first country in the Region to be verified as having eliminated leprosy. In Argentina, five provinces were confirmed free of vector-borne transmission of Chagas disease. Together, these milestones demonstrate what can be accomplished through sustained national commitment, with PAHO's support.

However, we should underscore the fragility of gains like these. The Region lost its verification status as free of endemic measles after sustained transmission was reestablished in Canada. At the same time, yellow fever outbreaks in several countries highlighted the continued threat posed by vaccine-preventable diseases. PAHO supported affected countries through sharing expertise, vaccination strategies, and strengthened surveillance and rapid response.

Health security remained a central pillar of the Organization's work during the reporting period. PAHO mobilized 174 tons of essential supplies to help countries prepare for and respond to disasters, complex humanitarian emergencies, and disease outbreaks. These efforts were reinforced through the deployment of experts and the coordination of emergency medical teams. PAHO's surveillance systems analyzed more than 2.2 million information signals, enabling early detection and timely risk assessment to support rapid public health action.

Immunization continued recovering from declines before and during the pandemic. The number of unvaccinated children under 1 year old fell from 1.3 million to 1.1 million. However, declining measles vaccination coverage demonstrated the ongoing need to strengthen routine vaccination programs and increase vaccine uptake through effective communication and public education.

Measurable progress was made in reducing preventable maternal deaths. Of the 12 countries receiving targeted PAHO support, 10 have recorded declines in maternal mortality ratios. Stronger surveillance systems, supportive policies, improvements in primary health care, and a strengthened health workforce led to this success.

Advances in the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases underscored the value of sustained collaboration with countries. These achievements reflected continued efforts to strengthen primary health care as the foundation for prevention, early diagnosis, and integrated care. By the end of the reporting period, PAHO's HEARTS in the Americas initiative was implemented in more than 14 000 primary health care centers, reaching an estimated 50 million adults. The number of patients receiving treatment for hypertension rose more than 20% in one year, from 5.7 million in 2025 to 6.9 million in 2026.

The growing burden of mental health conditions demanded increased attention. In response, PAHO launched the Regional Suicide Prevention Initiative, elevating suicide prevention as a regional public health priority. The initiative promotes stronger national policies and programs, and, ultimately, a more robust approach to suicide prevention that is grounded in multisectoral action and tailored to country needs and contexts.

The Regional Revolving Funds (RRF) demonstrated the value of regional solidarity in improving equitable access to essential medicines and health technologies. The RRF supported procurement of more than 214 million vaccine doses, over 10 million diagnostic tests, and more than 1 million treatments. Nearly every country and territory in the Americas accessed supplies through the RRF. The RRF also expanded their portfolio to incorporate new high-price medicines, including treatments for breast and prostate cancer, multiple sclerosis, and rare diseases. And by using pooled procurement, the RRF achieved significant price reductions.

Innovation contributed to progress in several priority areas. With PAHO's technical cooperation, countries expanded the use of digital tools and adopted new approaches to address persistent public health challenges. Member States purchased more than 780 telemedicine kits for 20 countries through the Regional Revolving Funds. The kits bring diagnosis, monitoring, and clinical follow-up closer to populations that have historically faced barriers to access. In one important example, Guatemala acquired telemedicine kits and maternal-fetal monitors to expand access to prenatal care and maternal health monitoring in hard-to-reach areas. In Panama, PAHO supported a cooperation agreement to use drones to transport medicines and health supplies to remote Indigenous communities. Across the Region, PAHO supported countries to ensure the safe and ethical use of artificial intelligence in public health.

The Organization also signed a landmark agreement with a global influenza vaccine manufacturer to secure an allocation of pandemic vaccine production for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The agreement supports access amid growing global demand in the event of a

future pandemic. At the same time, a technology transfer agreement was reached to strengthen regional production of seasonal influenza vaccines using cell-based platforms. This will improve and modernize regional vaccine manufacturing and help to reduce reliance on suppliers outside the Region.

The achievements of the past year reflect the strength of our partnership with Member States and the power of regional solidarity. Despite growing financial constraints, PAHO has once again demonstrated the resilience, adaptability, and leadership that have defined this Organization for more than 120 years. Through innovation, stronger partnerships, diversified financing, and greater efficiency, we continue to advance health across the Americas. These achievements demonstrate what is possible when we work together, and why we must continue to build on that progress.

But our work is far from over. The Region of the Americas will continue to face major public health challenges: rapid population aging, a growing burden of noncommunicable diseases, emerging and reemerging health threats, climate-related emergencies, and persistent inequalities in access to health care. Addressing them will require sustained investment, stronger collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to solidarity.

Together, Member States, with the support of PAHO, can build stronger health systems, protect the health of our populations, and ensure that the progress reflected in this report translates into lasting improvements in the lives of all people in the Americas.

Thank you very much, muchas gracias, merci beaucoup, muito obrigado.
