



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



41st DIRECTING COUNCIL

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 27 September-1 October 1999

Provisional Agenda Item 7.2

CD41/27 (Eng.)

16 July 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PAHO AWARD FOR IMMUNIZATION, 1999

Dr. Miguel Angel Galindo Sardiñas, Chief of the National Immunization Program at the Ministry of Health of Cuba since 1981, is the fourth recipient of the PAHO Immunization Award, which recognizes outstanding technical contributions to a national immunization program and to a country's efforts in controlling and eliminating vaccine preventable diseases. The award includes a certificate and a check in the amount of US\$ 2,000. Nominations were received from five countries.

The PAHO Award for Immunization was established in 1993, following the receipt of the Prince Mahidol Award by Dr. Ciro de Quadros, Director of PAHO's Division of Vaccines and Immunization, for his contribution to the 1991 eradication of poliomyelitis in the Western Hemisphere, the first region in the world to achieve this goal. A portion of the monetary component of the Prince Mahidol Award was matched with funds from PAHO to establish an annual Immunization Award. A Committee, established for the purpose and composed of members of PAHO's Technical Advisory Group on Vaccine-Preventable Diseases, selected Dr. Galindo as the recipient of the Award for 1999.

Dr. Galindo has dedicated 36 years of his professional career to the development of immunization programs in Cuba, during which time he has been responsible for managing the implementation of 48 national immunization campaigns. He developed Cuba's program for the elimination of measles, rubella, and mumps in 1988 and headed the campaign that led to the successful elimination of these three diseases in Cuba, the only country in the world that has done so in just seven years. Cuba has also eliminated congenital rubella syndrome and meningo-encephalitis, and the vaccine-preventable diseases of tetanus and whooping cough have been reduced to levels at which they have ceased to be public health problems. Under the leadership of Dr. Galindo, morbidity and mortality of meningococcal meningitis type B have been reduced

by 93% and 98% respectively, and hepatitis B morbidity has declined by 52% in children under 15 years of age. Currently, over 95% of Cuban children under 2 years of age are protected against 10 vaccine-preventable diseases.

Dr. Galindo is a member of Cuba's Group on Vaccine Experts and the Ministry of Health assigned him to lead the country's Technical Advisory Group on Immunization Practices. During his distinguished career in public health, Dr. Galindo has received numerous awards, which include Cuba's 1998 annual Health Award for Excellence and an award from the Cuban Society of Hygiene and Epidemiology. Currently he is working with provincial health authorities to implement a plan he elaborated to control *Haemophilus influenzae* type B.