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XXXIV REGIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING

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PAN AMERICAN FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE CENTER

The XX Pan American Sanitary Conference (St. George's, Grenada, 1978) adopted Resolution XIX in which it requested the Director to "study the possibility of transferring the responsibilities now borne by the Organization in relation to the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center to some international agency more closely concerned with agriculture,"

The XXVI Meeting of the Directing Council in 1979 adopted Resolution XXVI in which it "pronounced itself in favor of keeping the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth-Disease Center attached to PAHO as a regular program." This resolution instructed the Director "to keep in mind this favorable view of the Directing Council in continuing the aforementioned study and to include it in his subsequent report to the next Pan American Sanitary Conference."

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is the only agency that has expressed interest in a possible transfer of the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center, and has also noted that, if such transfer were to prove possible, the contributions of the Governments to finance the Center would also have to be transferred to IICA.

PAN AMERICAN FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE CENTER

In the thirteenth plenary session of the XX Pan American Sanitary Conference, held at St. George's, Grenada, in 1978, a resolution was approved which requested that the Director, "in consultation with competent agencies in the field as necessary, . . . study the possibility of transferring the responsibilities now borne by the Organization in relation to the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center to some international agency more closely concerned with agriculture, taking care to ensure that this transfer is effected without detriment to the valuable work accomplished thus far."

A year later, in the fourteenth plenary session of its XXVI Meeting, the PAHO Directing Council approved Resolution XXVI in which it pronounced itself in favor of keeping the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) attached to PAHO as a regular program. At the XII Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Zoonoses Control, held in April 1979, the Ministers of Agriculture or their Representatives, considering that the Special Program of Animal Health represented a valuable step toward the marshalling of international human resources in animal health and veterinary public health for the service of the countries, and mindful of the concern that the countries had expressed in their replies to the Director's inquiry on the subject, recommended that ". . . the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center continue to function as a regular program of the Organization and with the financial support of the Member and Participating Governments as approved and recommended at this Meeting."

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was the only agency which, in its reply to the inquiry of the Director of PAHO, expressed interest in participating in the required studies toward a possible transfer of PANAFTOSA. However, IICA has indicated that the contributions of the Governments that finance the Center should also be transferred to it. Its salary structure is similar to that of PAHO, but the social and tax benefits and policies are different.

In the proceedings of the XXVI Meeting of the Directing Council concern was expressed over the effects of inflation on the budgets of PANAFTOSA and CEPANZO and on the levels of technical cooperation programs and the priorities in public health. In Resolution XXVII of the same Meeting of the Council, the Director was instructed to give first priority to a comprehensive external evaluation of CEPANZO and PANAFTOSA.

Accordingly, a four-member External Evaluation Team was appointed to evaluate the operations and financing of the two Centers. The External Evaluation Team completed its work in April 1980, and its report was submitted to the XXVII Meeting of the Directing Council, held in Washington, D.C., from 22 September to 3 October 1980.

At the mandate of the Directing Council in Resolution XXVIII of its XXVII Meeting, a document titled "Proposal for a Five-Year Comprehensive Program for the Control and Eradication of Zoonoses and Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Latin America and the Caribbean" was prepared on the basis of the Evaluation Team's recommendations, in order to provide a basic framework that would attract more dependable and long-term sources of financing for the technical cooperation activities required in animal health and veterinary public health in the Hemisphere. This proposal was approved by the II Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial Level, on Animal Health, held in March 1981 in Washington, D.C., and by the Directing Council in its XXVIII Meeting held in September-October of the same year (Resolution XXXII).

In recent years PANAFTOSA's technical cooperation programs and those of the other units of the Special Program of Animal Health have been made more closely interactive in order to make the most of their human and financial resources.

At the request of the countries, the epidemiological reporting and surveillance systems for the vesicular diseases and the zoonoses of major public health importance are being unified, which makes it necessary that PANAFTOSA and CEPANZO cooperate closely on the operational and technical levels. Moreover, many of the strategies and technologies used by PANAFTOSA are increasingly having a larger and more direct application in the zoonoses and in public health in general.

In the area of manpower training, one of the technical cooperation activities of greatest importance to the countries in the fields of animal health and veterinary public health, PAHO is engaged in a Training Program in Animal Health for Latin America (PROASA). In this extensive and important program, to which the IDB is contributing US\$1.8 million, PANAFTOSA has a prominent part to play, not only in the courses on foot-and-mouth disease, but also in those on administration, epidemiology, quarantine work, and social communication.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that the aims contained in the Plan of Action for Implementation of the Regional Strategies for attaining the Goal of Health for All by the Year 2000, in relation to animal health and veterinary public health, include "improved human nutrition by ensuring the availability of animal protein, and by reducing socioeconomic losses due to the main zoonoses and to foot-and-mouth disease."

The corresponding areas of action mentioned in that document (which was approved by Resolution XI of the XXVIII Meeting of the Directing Council in September 1981) are promotion and cooperation in the control, eradication and prevention of foot-and-mouth disease through the following functions:

- i) Expansion of control programs and massive field application of oil-adjuvanted foot-and-mouth disease vaccine.
- ii) Transfer of technology for the production and control of oil-adjuvanted FMD vaccine.
- iii) Development of sanitary regulations for the international trade in animals and their products and by-products.
- iv) Strengthening of measures to prevent the introduction of exotic animal diseases.
- v) Development of national and intercountry emergency preparedness plans for the containment and eradication of exotic animal diseases.