

## **WHA51.24 International Decade of the World's Indigenous People**

The Fifty-first World Health Assembly,

Recalling the role of WHO in planning for and implementing the objectives of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People as recognized in resolutions [WHA47.27](#), [WHA48.24](#), [WHA49.26](#) and [WHA50.31](#);

Noting the report by the Director-General to the Executive Board;

Further recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 50/157 which invited specialized agencies to designate focal points for coordination of activities related to the International Decade and adopted the programme of activities for the International Decade, in which it is recommended that “specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other international and national agencies, as well as communities and private enterprises, should devote special attention to development activities of benefit to indigenous communities”, and that “the governing bodies of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system should adopt programmes of action for the Decade in their own fields of competence, in close cooperation with indigenous people”;

Recognizing with satisfaction the progress made in the Initiative on the Health of Indigenous People of the Americas;

Noting the importance of the traditional medical knowledge of indigenous people;

Noting with appreciation the activities of the focal point for the International Decade,

1. URGES Member States to develop and implement, in close cooperation with indigenous people, national plans of action or programmes on indigenous people's health which focus on ensuring access of indigenous people to health care; supporting the participation of indigenous representatives in WHO meetings; ensuring that health services are culturally sensitive to indigenous people; respecting, preserving and maintaining the knowledge of traditional healing and medicine; and ensuring the active participation of indigenous people in identifying their health needs and appropriate research for developing strategies to improve their health status and the future direction of their health;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to promote the inclusion of indigenous health in the work programme at country, regional and global levels;

(2) to report annually to the Health Assembly on progress on indigenous health initiatives globally, incorporating regional updates, and highlighting significant activities at country level;

(3) to improve and increase, in close collaboration with indigenous people, institutional and technical cooperation with Member States in the area of indigenous people's health, so that models of good practice in indigenous people's health are shared, globally, regionally and between countries in order to inspire, compare and highlight the rich diversity of projects, experiences and approaches;

(4) to encourage the representation of health workers of indigenous origin in WHO's work, including meetings;

(5) to promote, in close cooperation with indigenous people, the respect, preservation, and maintenance of the knowledge of traditional healing and medicine, and to promote the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of such knowledge, in conformity with trade and intellectual property conventions.

(Tenth plenary meeting, 16 May 1998 -  
Committee B, fourth report)