

23rd Annual Meeting

Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum

Sponsored by: Canada, Chile, Ecuador and Malaysia

FACING EBOLA AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN A COORDINATED MANNER FOR THE PREVENTION OF EMERGENCIES AND HEALTH DISASTERS

Whereas in the past year the Earth has experienced the most significant, serious and complex epidemic of the Ebola virus since the disease is known, in which the number of cases and deaths reported surpasses by far previous outbreaks and in which, for the first time, the virus appears in areas different from those in which it was traditionally confined;

Recalling that in recent years the international community has faced various infectious pathogens that have the ability to affect the life and health of a large proportion of the population, and the potential to generate alerts for global public health emergencies;

Emphasizing that to monitor the progress of the Ebola outbreak, unprecedented urgent action and deep collaboration and cooperation at national, regional and international levels are needed, including among the APPF Member States;

Noting that the statement issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) after a series of meetings of the Emergency Committee on International Health Regulations (IHR) regarding the Ebola outbreak in 2014 in West Africa, mentions the outbreak continued to constitute a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC);

Stressing that the expansion of the Ebola virus as well as other infectious agents, is strongly influenced, among other factors, by poor basic public health infrastructure in many countries; generated by: a deficiency in physical and health infrastructure, insufficient trained health personnel and a lack of investment in research on diseases affecting mainly less developed countries;

Noting with concern the devastating effects that these epidemics cause in the life and health of thousands of people, and the impact that these outbreaks have on the social and economic development of countries and their potential negative effects on a global scale;

Being aware that new disaster threats faced by the international community, among which are epidemics and the emergence of new emerging forms of disease, from which the Members States of this Forum are not isolated, should be addressed timely, jointly and in a coordinated manner, which requires to be maintained over time, and even if these threats are not present, a common agenda that prioritizes their attention for a rapid, coordinated and consistent response to them;

Appreciating the work and efforts done by many APPF Member States in this area as well as the contribution of the World Health Organization, as the direct coordinating authority on international health, and the commitment and spirit of global solidarity shown by relief workers who risked their lives to fight the outbreak in the front;

Appreciating that disaster management and administration, including health disasters, has been a constant concern of Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum, a result of which are

the multiple resolutions adopted to that effect.

RESOLVES TO:

1. **Reaffirm** our political commitment and solidarity to join efforts that respond to Ebola outbreak in West Africa and urge APPF Member States to collectively embrace their responsibility to urgently support the affected countries in coping with health crises of this kind and providing essential resources, human resources and capacities to ensure effective control of the current outbreak;

2. **Raise** awareness in the international community that all countries are at risk of facing a public health emergency because of the spread of infectious diseases, including those considered developed countries with high living standards and strong health systems; this requires improving overall responsibility for capacity building in public health and working jointly and in close collaboration with specialized agencies, the scientific community and other related groups;

3. **Encourage** APPF Member States and relevant United Nations organizations, especially the World Health Organization to continue working collaboratively in the development and implementation of strategies and programs for prevention and control of epidemics and infectious diseases;

4. **Request** the governments of APPF Member States to periodically assess the state of national readiness of programs for early detection and diagnosis of infectious diseases and the state of its basic health infrastructure and to make all efforts within their scope for improvement where necessary;

5. **Request** APPF Member States to carry out all necessary efforts to give full effect and applicability to the International Health Regulations of disease, within their internal regulations systems;

6. **Urge** APPF Member States to expand mutual cooperation in capacity building in public health by improving communication channels, avoiding stigmatization and fear, strengthening epidemic surveillance and alert and responses to new outbreaks;

7. **Recommend** APPF Member States to carry out outreach and training activities, both among health professionals and among the civilian population, facilitating adequate information on these diseases and reacting appropriately to these threats;

8. **Call upon** APPF Member States to collaborate closely in the fight against these diseases, promoting further research in this area, encouraging investment in this area and encouraging the development of new vaccines or other treatments available at low cost, in order to fight against them;

9. **Urge** APPF Member States to work on a joint protocol to combat emergencies caused by the Ebola virus at all borders, entry and exit points to countries.

Quito, January 14th, 2015