Welcome Message of the Regional Director

On behalf of the WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, myself and the entire Secretariat, I welcome you to the 68th

The 68th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa to Discuss Important Health Issues

The 68th session of the WHO Regional Committee (RC) for Africa opens today in Dakar, Senegal. This annual RC meeting brings together health ministers from the 47 Member States in the WHO African Region and is the highest WHO Governing Body on the continent. The current 68th session (RC68) will run from the 27th to 31st
Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa in Dakar, Republic of Senegal.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to his Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal and to the Senegalese people, for the hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for this meeting.

Our continent faces a number of public health issues which challenge health security in the Region including the ongoing Ebola Virus Disease outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We have been able to respond to these challenges in a timely and robust manner because of the excellent collaboration of the Member States, our partners and donors. Importantly, the readiness and capacity of our staff to support response activities in any part of our continent and the leadership of our Executive Management Team are also commendable. We remain on full alert to respond to any disease outbreak in any member state.

In Africa, Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is no longer an option, but an urgent requirement to the attainment of good health for all people as highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goal 3. We applaud efforts by several Member States that have taken steps to improve public finance management which is one of the critical ways to progress towards UHC. The WHO African Region Secretariat is determined to support its Member States towards the attainment of UHC given our mandate and comparative advantage. The rapid increase in non-communicable diseases in many African countries is a worrying trend that needs urgent actions. The good news is that the underlying causes of this problem such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, poor diets and harmful use of alcohol are well known. I urge member states to take deliberate and sustained actions to address these risk factors. At the same time, we should also keep a keen eye on communicable diseases for which we now have abundant information, medicines and technology to handle. We are however cognizant of the fact that there are many social, economic and environment determinants of health which are outside the scope of the Ministries of Health but contribute to the health of the African population. We shall therefore continue to advocate to other sectors and partners to take effective actions in their sectors and to ensure that health is integrated into all policies as these will leapfrog the attainment of UHC on our continent.

During this Regional Committee, we shall present a August 2018 at the King Fahd Palace Hotel.

RC68 is taking place at a critical moment and will discuss important issues such as the WHO African Regional Office (WHO/AFRO) Programme Budget 2020/21, the ongoing Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the WHO/AFRO Transformation Agenda, sustainable financing for Universal Health Coverage (UHC), frameworks for certification of polio eradication and control of cholera among other important topics.

During the meeting, the WHO Regional Director for Africa will present a report on the work of WHO in the Region from 2017 to 2018. Furthermore, the delegates will review the Progress Report on the Implementation of the Transformation Agenda of the World Health Organization Secretariat in the African Region: 2015–2020 and a report on the resource mobilization efforts through strengthening partnerships to better support to Member States.

A draft global strategy on health, environment and climate change and a document on ensuring sustainable financing for UHC in Africa in the midst of changing global and local economic factors will also be presented and discussed.

The Regional Director will launch the report of The State of Health in the African Region. A Roadmap for Access to medicines and vaccines and a report on the Status of implementation of the four time-bound commitments on non-communicable diseases in the African Region will also be discussed. In addition, a draft Global Action Plan on the health of refugees and migrants will be presented and discussed.


For the first time, there is a health walk on the programme dubbed “Walk the Talk: 70 years of WHO service to the countries” in which delegates participated on Sunday 26th August...
progress report on the implementation of the Transformation Agenda (2015-2020) in the WHO African Region. This is a pledge I made at the beginning of my term of office intended to improve our effectiveness, responsiveness and accountability. As the report indicates, a lot has been achieved on these aspects in our regional and our country offices. Our report on the work of WHO in the African region 2017-2018 will on the other hand present our key programmatic achievements which I encourage you to read, discuss and ask for clarifications where needed.

This year, the daily Regional Committee Journal will be provided to delegates electronically only. This is one of our modest contributions to save our environment – a well-known determinant of public health. The WHO Secretariat is at your disposal for any assistance needed during this session. I wish you a successful meeting.

Dr Matshidiso Moeti
WHO Regional Director for Africa

OPENING CEREMONY - Monday, 27 August 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07:00-08:00</td>
<td>Pick up of participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>08:00</td>
<td>Positioning of Ballet group and Hostesses</td>
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<td>Arrival and ushering of participants /main entrance</td>
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<td>Registration</td>
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<td>Wearing of RC68 scarves</td>
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<td>08:00-09:00</td>
<td>Distribution of document folders</td>
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<td>Participants take their seats in the hall</td>
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<td>Projection of messages/announcements on the screens</td>
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<td>Musical interlude</td>
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<tr>
<td>08:00-09:00</td>
<td>Arrival of officials / VIP entrance</td>
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<td>Registration</td>
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<td>Wearing of scarves</td>
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<td>Participants take their seats</td>
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<tr>
<td>09:00-09:30</td>
<td>Arrival – Installation of the Guest of Honour</td>
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<td>09:30-09:45</td>
<td>Group photograph</td>
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2018.

In addition seven side events will take place during the RC. They are on improving Public Finance Management to advance progress towards UHC in Africa; tackling the burden of hypertension and strengthening the management of severe NCDs through public health approaches; launch of The State of Health in the African Region; and Digital Health expansion in Africa and the AFRO-ITU agreement. Other side events are on engaging African governments to strengthen national health research systems with complementary international cooperation; development and implementation of integrated and affordable assisted reproductive technologies (ART) services in the African Region; and Sahel Malaria Elimination Initiative – a high level ministerial meeting.

Finally, the delegates will discuss the Programme Budget 2020-2021: Regional Committee Consultation document. An exhibition will showcase the work of WHO and its Member States throughout the duration of the meeting.

COFFEE BREAK / LUNCHES

Snacks, morning and afternoon tea/coffee and lunch will be served free of charge to participants during the working days of the Committee. Lunch for Ministers and all Heads of Delegation will be served in Le Manguier restaurant. Members of the delegations and secretariat staff will have their lunch in the Adriana and Green rooms that are opposite each other in the main conference (see the layout in the events app).

Healthy Life Expectancy Increases in the WHO African Region

The findings of an analyses conducted by the WHO Regional Office for Africa presented in a report titled State of health in the WHO African Region: Where we are, where we need to go” have shown that the healthy life
09:45-09:50 Introduction by the Master of Ceremonies

09:50-10:00 Welcome show presented by children
Statement by Dr Pagwesese David Parirenyatwa, President of the Seventy-first World Health Assembly and Chairperson of the Sixty-seventh -session of the Regional Committee
Statement by Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa

10:00-10:10 Statement by Dr Pagwesese David Parirenyatwa, President of the Seventy-first World Health Assembly and Chairperson of the Sixty-seventh -session of the Regional Committee

10:10-10:20 Statement by Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa

10:10-10:30 Statement by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO

10:30-10:35 Film

10:35-11:00 Official opening of the Sixty-eighth session of the Regional Committee by the Guest of Honour

11:10-11:30 Cocktail

End of the opening ceremony

Like (2)

RC68 eJOURNAL

The Secretariat of RC68 will publish a daily Electronic Journal (eJournal) which replaces the printed versions published during the previous Regional Committees. The easy-to-use eJournal is designed to improve interactions with our readers and to reach a wider readership. It offers new features such as built-in videos, photo galleries and audio recordings. The eJournal will be distributed in the three WHO working languages namely English, French and Portuguese. The eJournal can be accessed by email on all computers, mobile phones, iPads and all types of mobile devices at any time during the Regional

expectancy in the WHO African Region increased from 50.9 years to 53.8 years between 2012 and 2015. This indicator which is a measure of life expectancy adjusted for years spent with disability ranks as the highest increase in all the six WHO regions.

The report points out that the gap in healthy life expectancy between the best and worst performing countries in the Region has reduced from 27.5 to 22 years. However, there are inequities; with healthy life expectancy being highest in countries with better economies and improvement being fastest in countries with large populations and high population density. The report however adds that, “the levels of healthy life in the Region are still very low compared to other regions”.

Furthermore, the analyses showed that the burden of disease in the region is now driven by communicable and non-communicable (NCD) conditions and violence/injuries. However, lower respiratory conditions, HIV/AIDS and diarrheal diseases still represent the top causes of both morbidity and mortality. Yet, levels of morbidity and mortality are reducing significantly.

Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) due to the top 10 causes of morbidity have more than halved between 2000 and 2015, driven by reductions in incidence of malaria, HIV/AIDS and diarrhoeal diseases. The crude death rate due to the top 10 causes of mortality also reduced from 87.7 to 51.3 per 100 000 population in the same period. No significant reduction was seen for NCDs.

In her foreword to the report, Dr Matshidiso Moeti the WHO Regional Director for Africa, said that “since the year 2000, the people of Africa have benefitted from economic growth, with poverty largely in retreat. The health and well-being of people in Africa is improving, a result of investments targeting the most pressing health needs in a context of a changing social, economic, political and environmental landscape. The people of Africa currently share a vision for the future that is filled with optimism and hope”.

The report further states that a person in the Region aged between 30 and 70 years has a 20.7% chance of dying from one of the major NCDs. The prevalence of the four major risk
Committee. Inquiries about the ejournal including suggestions for improvement should be sent to Phyllis Jiri on (jirip@who.int).

TRANSPORT OF DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE CENTRE

Buses will pick up delegates from their hotels to the King Fahd Palace, venue of the RC68, from 27th to 31st August 2018, according to the following schedule:

- 7.15am: Departure from all hotels to the King Fahd Hotel
- 19H30: departure from King Fahd hotel to the hotels

Pick-up Axes:

- Axes 1: Hotel Sargal, Hotel la Madrague, Hotel Ngor Diarama
- Axes 2: Fana Hotel, Hotel Fleur de Lys-Almadies, Lodge des Almadies, Hotel la Détente, Hotel The Palms, Hotel Yaas Almadies
- Axes 3: Hotel Terrou-Bi, Radisson Blu Hotel

The report provides a very good platform for Member States to engage with and learn from each other as they move towards sustainable and equitable health development. The report which will be launched on 29th August 2018, is one of the key highlights of the 68th Regional Committee.

CURRENCY

The current currency in Senegal is the WAEMU CFA franc.

- US$ 1 = 574 F CFA
- 1 EURO = 656 FCFA

SECURITY

- Emergency police: 17
- Fire Brigade: 18
- UNDSS Senegal: Mr Pierre-Etienne Ruff, Security Advisor, Tel: +221 77 450 58 21, Email: pierre-etienne.ruff@undss.org
- WHO AFRO: Mr Fofana Ibrahim, Security Advisor, Tel: +221 77 335 16 35 E-mail: fofanai@who.int

OFFICIAL DINNER
Walking the Talk to commemorate WHO’s 70th Anniversary: More than 2000 People Trek Eight kilometers to Advocate for prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases

More than eight hundred people from all walks of life took part in an 8km Health walk to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization. The event was held in Dakar, Senegal on Sunday 26 August on the eve of the WHO Regional Committee, which is the annual meeting of Ministers of Health from the WHO African Region.

Organised by the Ministry of Health and Social Action of Senegal and the World Health Organization, the aim of the Health Walk was threefold: (1) To raise awareness and profile of the work and goals of WHO and the Senegalese Minister of Health and Social Action (2) To engage Regional Committee delegates, and residents of Dakar in a celebration of WHO’s 70th birthday. (3) To participate in the global movement to promote health and particularly physical activity as part of a healthy sustainable future.

The event was open to people of all ages and it attracted Ministers of Health from other African
INTERNET IN THE MEETING ROOM

User Name: RC68
no password is required

EXHIBITION

As in previous Regional Committee sessions, there is an exhibition on the work of WHO and Member States in the African region. The exhibition is mounted in room A0 behind the plenary hall. This year's exhibition focuses on WHO's 70th anniversary (successes and challenges), the Regional Office’s Transformation Agenda and Universal Health Coverage. Delegates are invited to visit the exhibition hall.

MEDICAL CONTACTS

1. Hôpital Principal De Dakar : 338395050
2. Samu National : 1515 - 338698252
3. Poison Centre : 818001515

Take our quick survey

How would you rate the information in this issue of the Journal publication?
- Excellent
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor

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