



JOURNAL

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**64th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean,
9–12 October 2017
Islamabad, Pakistan**

**EMRO/RC64/DJ/2
10 October 2017**

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- Credentials** Original credentials not submitted in advance of the opening session should be handed to the WHO Secretariat on the first day of the meeting.
- Documents** Documents will be distributed through the website <http://www.emro.who.int/about-who/rc64/index.html> and the Regional Committee mobile app. The daily journal will be distributed to participants each morning.
Note: There will be return service for documents to Member States.
- Internet access** Wireless internet access is available in all meeting areas.
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- WHO publications** Publications related to the agenda of the Regional Committee will be on display outside the Sheesh Mahal conference room. Other recent publications and the EMHJ will be available.
- Security** Please ensure your ID badge is displayed at all times while inside the premises.
- Interventions** To help in drafting the report of this session of the Regional Committee, delegations may provide the text of remarks on paper to a member of the WHO Secretariat or send directly by email to emrgorcrep@who.int. NGO statements may also be submitted for posting on the website.
- Contact information** Logistics: Mr Jaffar Jaffal, mobile +92 302 855 6231 and Ms Nahla Ahmed +92 302 855 6232
Conference room: Ms Nada Zahra, mobile +92 302 855 6268
- Note** WHO has a no-smoking policy for all WHO meetings and related functions. Smoking is prohibited in all areas related to the Regional Committee sessions.

1. Programme of work

Agenda item	09:00–11:00 Regular session (Sheesh Mahal Hall)	
1	Election of officers Adoption of the provisional agenda and provisional daily time-table Establishment of the Drafting Committee	EM/RC64/1-Rev.1
2	Annual report of the Regional Director for the year 2016 and progress reports	EM/RC64/2 EM/RC64/INF.DOC.1-10
Agenda item	11:30–13:00 Special session	
	Update on the polio eradication programme in Pakistan and Afghanistan Humanitarian emergencies in the Eastern Mediterranean Region Public health preparedness and response: meeting the IHR obligations	
Agenda item	14:30–16:00 Regular session	
4(c)	Towards WHO's 13th General Programme of Work 2019–2023 "Keep the World Safe, Improve Health, Serve the Vulnerable"	Draft Concept Note
6	First report of the Programme Subcommittee of the Regional Committee	EM/RC64/9
8	Place and date of future sessions of the Regional Committee Regional Suggestions for Elective Posts for WHA71 and Executive Board Members Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Award Ceremony	EM/RC64/INF.DOC.14

2. Report of meetings Monday, 9 October 2017

Technical meetings

Chair: Dr Ali Bin Talib bin Ali Al Hinai (Oman)

The Regional Director, Dr Mahmoud M. Fikri, opened the technical meetings. He noted that the aim of the meeting was to discuss topics of current interest and concern, to update Member States on the situation and progress in addressing those issues and to present any proposed strategic actions. The outcome of the meetings would be presented to the Regional Committee for endorsement of any recommendations. The following subjects were discussed: private sector engagement for advancing universal health coverage; developing national capacity for research and research ethics to improve decision-making for health; Good Governance for Medicines programme in the Region; implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC); and integrated surveillance for communicable diseases.

Opening session

Formal opening of the session

The opening session of the 64th Session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean was held on the evening of Monday 9 October 2017 in Shamadan Hall of the Serena hotel in Islamabad, Pakistan. The session was opened by Dr Feroz Firozuddin, Minister of Public Health of Afghanistan and Vice-Chair of the 63rd session. Dr Firozuddin said that despite the challenges that continued to be faced by countries in the Region, the work over the past year had been rewarding. He noted the importance of collective action and partnership and expressed confidence that the joint efforts of countries and WHO would produce results.

Address by the Regional Director

The Regional Director, Dr Mahmoud Fikri, referred in his opening address to the regional roadmap which translated his vision into a set of strategic actions to guide WHO's work with Member States for 2017–2021. Priorities identified in the roadmap were aligned with the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and WHO would work closely with countries to achieve those targets. Indicators had been developed for progress to be properly monitored. WHO's capacity would be increased to more effectively meet the needs of Member States, and partnerships with United Nations agencies, partners and stakeholders expanded to coordinate humanitarian activities for those affected by conflict, environmental threats and natural disasters. He referred to threats to health security, including acute watery diarrhoea and cholera, avian influenza (H5N1), Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus and polio, which were increasingly placing vulnerable lives at risk. He commended Afghanistan and Pakistan for their tireless efforts to eradicate polio and Somalia on its three-year polio-free status. He said that the elimination of measles was the next goal. He concluded by saying that health must be placed at the centre of development and investment in health yielded high returns.

Address by the Director-General

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, referred to the challenges facing the Region with almost two thirds of countries directly or indirectly affected by emergencies. He praised the cholera response in Yemen which had resulted in a declining caseload. He called for attacks on health workers and health facilities to end. He noted that the goal of polio eradication was closer than ever before and regional progress in the provision of treatment for viral hepatitis. He urged remaining countries to ratify the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products to strengthen tobacco control efforts. He expressed hope that agreement would be reached on the General Programme of Work 2019–2023 at the special session of the Executive Board for endorsement at the 2018 World Health Assembly. As the foundation for WHO's work, the SDGs represented priorities on which the world had agreed – health coverage, health security, health targets, and health leadership. WHO would

support countries progress towards universal health coverage, strengthen global health security, and drive progress towards the health-related targets of the SDGs. As a results-oriented organization, WHO needed to focus on outcomes and impact, and to ensure that progress could be measured. He said that he looked forward to working with countries to make their shared vision a reality – keeping the world safe, improving health and serving the vulnerable.

Address by the Government of Pakistan

H.E. Ms Saira Afzal Tarar, Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, welcomed the participants to the 64th session of the Regional Committee, which was being held under the auspices of HE Mr Mamnoon Hussain, President of Pakistan. She said that the convening of the session in Pakistan, and the presence of His Excellency the President at the inaugural session, was a reflection of the highest levels of commitment to health in her country. She noted the large and diverse populations across the Region and highlighted the need to invest in human health capital and to employ innovation in providing access to health services. She noted the contributions of Pakistan in various health-related initiatives and called for collective efforts by countries to address common health issues. She wished the Committee success in its work.

H.E. Mr Mamnoon Hussain, President of Pakistan, welcomed participants to the 64th session of the Regional Committee. He expressed confidence that the decisions arising from the deliberations of the conference would result in improved access to health care and health outcomes for populations of the Region. He highlighted the example of the Prime Minister's Health Insurance Programme, which aimed to ensure that the most vulnerable in society would be able to access treatment free of charge from both public and private health institutions. He noted that through the efforts of the Government of Pakistan, the issue of assistive technology had been included on the agenda of the forthcoming 142nd Executive Board. He expressed confidence that despite the challenges threatening polio eradication efforts, the eradication of this deadly disease would shortly be achieved. He noted that the spread of polio had demonstrated that diseases were not limited to geographical boundaries and stressed that international cooperation was necessary to address the challenges. He concluded by pointing out global inequities in access to health care and the negative impacts on people's health caused by malnutrition, food shortages and environmental pollution, especially in developing countries.

3. Other meetings Tuesday, 10 October 2017

16:00	Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation, Down Syndrome, and State of Kuwait Prize selection (<i>closed side meeting</i>)	Baltit Meeting Room Ground Floor
16:00	Social health protection: global and regional good practices	Faisalabad Meeting Room, Ground Floor
17:00	Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria	Faisalabad Meeting Room, Ground Floor
17:00	G5 Initiative	Quetta Meeting Room Ground Floor
18:00	Meeting of the Drafting Committee	Baltit Meeting Room Ground Floor
20:00	Dinner hosted by Dr Mahmoud Fikri, Regional Director	Shamadan Hall/Serena Hotel Garden