



World Health
Organization

Western Pacific

Health ministers endorse WHO five-year plan to make the Western Pacific the healthiest, safest region

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Health ministers and senior officials representing the 37 countries and areas of the World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Region today agreed on priorities for WHO's work in the Region over the coming five years, with the goal of making the Western Pacific the world's healthiest and safest region.

The WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific today endorsed *For the Future: Towards the Healthiest and Safest Region* – a policy paper developed by Regional Director Dr Takeshi Kasai and his team, in extensive consultations with Member States, partners and WHO staff, to respond to current and future health challenges in the Region.

“The document endorsed by the Regional Committee today is a shared vision for WHO's work with Member States and partners in the Region for the coming five years – a vision which builds on a proud history of health achievements and strong tradition of solidarity; and a story about the future, which we have written together,” said Dr Kasai.

The paper sets out four main priorities:

1. health security, including antimicrobial resistance;
2. noncommunicable diseases and ageing;
3. climate change, the environment and health; and

4. reaching the unreached – people and communities still affected by infectious disease, and high rates of maternal and infant mortality.

“In the many conversations I’ve had since February with leaders, partners, health workers, and people in communities across the Region, three key messages have emerged. First, while we should continue what we are doing well, we cannot stand still. Our Region is extremely dynamic, and rapidly changing. To stay relevant and valuable, WHO must also keep changing, and stay ahead of the curve,” said Dr Kasai.

“Second, Member States greatly value the direct, tailored support WHO provides. While countries have many challenges in common, each is unique. We are committed to continuing to provide support to every country for their specific priorities.”

“Third, it’s clear that we need to focus on the most pressing health challenges of the future. We will work with countries to ‘future-proof’ their health systems. This requires new thinking and new ways of working,” he added.

Notes to editors

A livestream of the Regional Committee proceedings, official documents, fact sheets and videos on the issues to be discussed can be accessed here:

www.who.int/westernpacific/about/governance/regional-committee/seventieth-session

Updates are being posted on the @WHOWPRO Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts with the hashtag #RCM70.

Working with 194 Member States across six regions, WHO is the United Nations specialized agency responsible for public health. Each WHO region has its own regional committee—a regional governing body composed of ministers of health and senior officials from Member States. Each regional committee meets annually.

There are 37 countries and areas in the WHO Western Pacific Region: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, France (*which has responsibility for* French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna), Hong Kong SAR (China), Japan, Kiribati, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Macao SAR (China), Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga,

Tuvalu, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (*which has responsibility for* Pitcairn Islands), the United States of America (*which has responsibility for* American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam), Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.