

Joint Statement
of the Fourth Tripartite Health Ministers Meeting (THMM)
November 21, 2010
Jeju, Korea

We, the Korean, Chinese and Japanese Health Ministers met in Jeju, Korea on November 21, 2010 and discussed issues of common concern to our three countries in the health and medical fields. The discussion covered pandemic influenza, food safety, clinical research, emergency preparedness and responses, and cooperation on the achievement of the health-related MDGs in the Region.

1. Cooperation on Health Issues

(1) Pandemic Influenza

We have continued to work closely together and strengthen our cooperation regarding joint responses to pandemic influenza based on the Joint Statement of the first Tripartite Health Ministers Meeting (THMM), the Memorandum of Cooperation regarding Joint Response against Pandemic Influenza signed on April 8, 2007 among the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Family Affairs of the Republic of Korea (changed now to the Ministry of Health and Welfare), the Ministry of Health of the People's Republic of China, and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan (hereinafter referred to as "the Ministries"), and the Joint Action Plan on Joint Preparedness and Response against Pandemic Influenza signed at the second THMM.

We have strived to develop prevention and response measures against pandemic influenza and have strengthened cooperation through a tripartite seminar. The seminar was held in Seoul in March 2010 to discuss responses taken against pandemic influenza and future plans. The Ministries also have closely shared through their focal points epidemiological information on cases of H1N1 influenza infection, relevant laboratory information, and information on public health measures, which led to successfully deal with pandemic influenza outbreaks last year.

In light of the outbreak of the H1N1 virus last year, we reaffirmed the importance of continued cooperation among the Ministries as a means of improving Asia's responses against pandemics. In addition to the above-mentioned cooperation, continuous endeavors for sharing information – including information on avian influenza such as H5N1 – should be taken in cooperation with the Ministries' CDCs, the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, ASEAN and other Asia-Pacific countries. We also reaffirmed the importance of our commitment to striving to protect public health and minimizing any damage caused by pandemic influenza in Asia through mutual cooperation and exchanges.

(2) Food Safety

We shared the necessity to cooperate on food safety at the second THMM. Based on the Memorandum of Cooperation on Food Safety signed by the Ministries in November 2009, we have closely worked together in the area of food safety.

We have strengthened cooperation by holding a tripartite food safety forum in Jeju in November 2010.

We reaffirmed the need to exchange information on food safety laws, regulations and compulsory standards as well as inspection procedures, methods and technology of each of the three countries and to promptly notify the other two Ministries if a matter related to food safety and sanitation takes place in one country. We also acknowledged the need to share information and exchange human resources for cooperation on food safety in the future.

(3) Clinical trials

We jointly decided at the first THMM to cooperate on clinical researches to facilitate drug development in the three countries. At the second and third THMM, we reaffirmed the need to continuously strengthen tripartite cooperation on clinical trials on drugs.

We held meetings of the Director-General level of pharmaceutical-related bureaus and of the working-level three times respectively. Through the meetings, we reaffirmed the importance of tripartite cooperation in the area of clinical research including clinical trials and decided on how to proceed with joint research on ethnic factors in clinical trials data of the three countries. In addition, we have strengthened cooperation on clinical trials through the tripartite joint symposium on clinical trials held in Tokyo, Beijing and Seoul in April 2008, December 2009 and September 2010, respectively.

We shared the view that we should strengthen cooperation on clinical trials between the Ministries.

(4) Emergency Preparedness and Responses including Disaster Management

Based on the Joint Statement issued after the first THMM, which designated emergency preparedness and responses, including disaster management, as an area for future cooperation, an international symposium on disaster medical management was held in Tokyo in March 2009 and was attended by persons involved in this field in Korea, Japan and China. The International Conference on Health Response to Natural Disasters was held in Chengdu, China in September 2010.

Since sharing information on each country's disaster medical response systems and lessons learned from major earthquakes was highly valued at these symposia, we reaffirmed the importance of the field of emergency preparedness and responses as an area of cooperation among the Ministries and reaffirmed that future cooperation should be considered.

2. New Agenda Item: Health-related MDGs

We fully endorse the World Health Assembly Resolution 63.15 that urges Member States to make progress toward the health-related MDGs. In particular, we share the view that improving health of women and children in developing countries is one of the core elements in achieving all eight goals.

We also decided to work together in our efforts to implement the Global

Strategy for Women's and Children's Health launched at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the Sixty-fifth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. For that, we decided to share efforts and experiences of the three countries in improving maternal and child health in developing countries and to explore measures for further cooperation based on plans and progress of each of the three countries in terms of its action for the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health.

3. Next Meeting

(1) Acknowledging that strengthening cooperation in the health and medical fields is mentioned in "Vision 2020" adopted at the Third Trilateral Summit Meeting in May 2010, we reaffirmed the common recognition that the THMM is to be held on a regular basis and that all activities will be conducted on a basis of equality, reciprocity, and mutual benefit and do not affect relations currently established between institutions or individuals of each country and are expected to be in harmony with the activities and goals of other international health bodies where applicable.

(2) The next meeting will be held in China.