

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

AD HOC CODEX INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE Fifth Session

SPEECHES OF OPENING SESSION

Part I: Mr. Young-jin, Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, Republic of Korea

Tom Heilandt, Secretary General of CODEX,

Dr. Aidara-Kane, Awa from the WHO,

Dr. Sarah, Cahill from the FAO

Allow me to extend my warmest welcome to you all.

And my warm greeting also goes out to everyone from the 188 members of CODEX as well as those from the 219 observers including the OIE.

Thank you for joining us from all parts of the world, and a big welcome to the 5th Session of the *Ad Hoc* Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance, hosted by the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety of the Republic of Korea.

As global trade of food increases sharply, food safety has become a key area of consumer interest and concerns. In particular, discussions surrounding the antimicrobial resistance is indeed a global issue that we cannot put off any further.

Antibiotics are essential in the prevention and treatment of infectious disease. However, overuse and misuse of antibiotics can cause antimicrobial resistant bacteria to occur, which poses a serious threat to one's health as it may lead to even the most trivial infections to be incurable. Antimicrobial resistant bacteria can in-fact threaten the overall health of the general public.

Antimicrobial resistant bacteria can breakout and spread at any point in the overall process in handling, producing and distribution of agricultural, meat and fisheries products as well as any food items. Therefore, it is essential that the entire food supply network be put under close control. Also, Antimicrobial resistant bacteria can easily cross borders through trade of food items. This calls for a greater need for an integrated and consistent response in dealing with a possible breakout.

International organizations including the FAO, WHO and the OIE have set out to raise awareness of the seriousness of the matter and called for joint efforts at the global level. Let me take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and continued interest of the various international organizations in fighting against the antimicrobial resistant bacteria.

The Last meeting of the Task Force was the 4th TFAMR held in 2010. Since then, the Task Force had been dormant for some time. It is indeed a great relief and pleasure to see the revival of the meeting in 7 years and to be hosting the 5th Task Force meeting here in Jeju. I would like to thank the CODEX members and the observers for your support in making this possible.

CODEX is a large-scale government level organization that was established in 1962 jointly by the FAO and the WHO with the aim to present global food safety and international food standards and currently it has 188 members and 219 observers.

I believe the 5th Session of the *Ad Hoc* Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance would be a great occasion for us to discuss ways to reduce the impact of antimicrobial resistant bacteria that can be traced back to various of food products. I believe that you will discuss ways to pay further caution when using antibiotics and also discuss the roles of the different international organization in minimizing the impact of antimicrobial resistant bacteria.

I hope this conference will serve as an important opportunity for us to share valuable knowledge and experiences. I sincerely hope that consumers around the world will benefit from the achievements of such conferences.

As the chair country, the Republic of Korea will provide all the necessary support for the success of this conference. We trust that all the participating members and observers of CODEX will work to further contribute to the improvement of public health through this conference for the next 4 years till 2020.

Thank you once again for participating in this year's conference. I hope you will also have a chance to enjoy the UNESCO world natural heritage here in Jeju Island this Thursday.

In closing, I wish each and every one of you the best of health.

Thank you very much.

Part II: Dr. Purwiyatno Hariyadi, Vice-Chair of Codex Alimentarius Commission

Excellencies,

Minister Food and Drug Safety, the Republic of Korea

Representatives of the FAO and WHO

Chair of the Ad Hoc Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (TFAMR).

Codex Secretariats

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very Good Morning to you all.

It is a great honour for me to participate in this session of the TFAMR5. On behalf of the new Bureau of the CAC, I would like to welcome you all to this beautiful place of Jeju, Republic of Korea. In this special occasion, I would like to highlight the importance of the TFAMR work in the context of the Codex Alimentarius work.

As we all know, the Codex Alimentarius Commission has worked developing and encouraging implementation of harmonized international standards, codes of practice and guidelines covering all aspects of food safety, including handling and distribution along the food chain. In setting international standards for food, Codex has a dual mandate to protect the health of consumers and to ensure fair practices in the food trade.

In fulfilling its mandate, especially to protect the health of consumer, Codex is very much aware of the importance of responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials in food system. Concerted efforts are needed; especially to minimize the potential adverse impact on consumer health resulting from the use of antimicrobial agents in food system, in particular the development of antimicrobial resistance.

That is why, in my opinion, the work related to issues of AMR discussed in this session is central to the mission of Codex Alimentarius. Only if we can address the threat of AMR properly then protection of consumer health and sustainable food security may potentially be able to be achieved. Without addressing the issue of AMR, the Sustainable Development Goals of good health and well-being cannot be met.

In that context, we are glad that The Codex Alimentarius Commission agreed in July 2016 to re-establish the Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance. I would therefore like to pay credit to TFAMR chair, Professor Yong Ho Park, and the Republic of Korea secretariat team for constructing the agenda we have this week. Every item on the agenda is important and critical to achieving our goal.

As identified clearly at the Term of Reference, central to TFAMR work are

To review and revise as appropriate the Code of Practice to Minimise and Contain Antimicrobial Resistance (CAC/RCP 61-2005) to address the entire food chain, in line with the mandate of Codex, and

To develop Guidance on Integrated AMR surveillance relevant and applicable to Members to enable coherent management of antimicrobial resistance along the food chain.

To improve the relevance and applicability of the text, we must ensure that every member country is able to contribute to this discussion. This is especially critical since we know, that many countries have already developed national plan of action on AMR. So, it is very important for us to make sure that the texts are complementing the national plans that many countries are developing; and are relevant to every stakeholders along the food chain, everywhere, globally. Obviously, we must seek a consensus, with the spirit of achieving better consumer protection and fair trade.

I would like to close by saying that the Commission Chair, my fellow Vice-Chairs and I want to ensure that we are close to Codex Member Countries, to the secretariat, to our parent organizations and in particular to the Chairs of all subsidiary bodies. The essential key to the advancement of standards is the works of Codex committees and taskforces. We want to achieve impactful results for Codex and for better and safer food for everyone, everywhere. We are sure that together we have the power to do so.

I congratulate you all and wish everyone a successful Session.

Thank you.

Part III: Dr Sarah Cahill, Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N.

Minister Young-jin, Ministry of 'Food and Drug Safety, Republic of Korea

Professor Park, University of Seoul and Chairman of the Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance

Vice-chair person of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Prof. Hariyada

Delegates to this 5th Session of the Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance

Colleagues of the Korean Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Codex Alimentarius and the World Health Organization, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, it is indeed a pleasure to welcome you to this 5th Session of the task Force on Antimicrobial on the wonderful island of Jeju. I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Republic of Korea for willingness once again to host this task force, without whom this meeting would not be possible.

Since adopting a Resolution on AMR in 2015, in support of the Global Action Plan on AMR, FAO has been increasingly active in this field, engaging with the food and agriculture sector in its member countries to raise awareness on this issue, identifying the role the food and agriculture sector has to play and supporting them in finding the means to progress.

All of us here today are already fully aware of the threat posed by antimicrobial resistance and need to take appropriate action. As was reiterated by the tripartite of FAO, WHO and OIE during the world antibiotic awareness week in mid-November "Everyone has a role to play". The re-establishment of this task force demonstrates that the food safety community has taken this message on board and stands ready to play its role. During the course of this week, I hope that the spirit of action you have shown to date will allow you forge a common path forward, bearing in mind as we always do in meetings of the Codex Alimentarius that "safe food benefits everyone".

I have recently heard the threat posed by Antimicrobial resistance being described as the '*tragedy of the commons*' where optimising for the individual (person, sector) in the short term is optimal for no one in the long term. However the Codex Alimentarius gives us the opportunity to address this problem by establishing standards for the greater good and allow us to optimise the valuable resource of antimicrobials in the long term for everyone's benefit.

With that I would like to wish you successful discussions this week. Know that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is fully supportive of this work and stands ready to support both the development and implementation of these important international standards on antimicrobial resistance.

Thank you for your attention

Part IV: Dr Awa Aidara-kane World Health Organization

Dr Awa Aidara-kane welcomed the participants on behalf of WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhamon Gebreyesus at this 5th session of the Codex Task Force on AMR.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is considered to be one of the most important public health threats globally, and is an area where WHO's strong leadership is expected.

The Global Action Plan for Antimicrobial Resistance developed by WHO in collaboration of FAO and OIE, and adopted by the 68th World Health Assembly in 2015 serves as the global blueprint for AMR.

The United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG) goes beyond the tripartite and looks at AMR beyond the human health, animal health, and agriculture. IACG is co-chaired by the WHO DG and the UN Deputy Secretary-General. AMR is now beyond ministries and now considered as a priority by Heads of States.

With regard to AMR from the food chain, WHO has been leading and shaping the global agenda since 1997, when WHO highlighted that the use of quinolones in food-producing animals was associated with reduced sensitivity to fluoroquinolone in *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*, which are the two most important zoonotic bacteria.

An important milestone was a development of WHO global principles for containment of antimicrobial resistance in animals intended for food in 2000, where WHO recommended phasing out a use of antimicrobials as growth promoters. This was almost twenty years ago and the situation has gotten worse.

A joint FAO/OIE/WHO expert meeting convened by WHO in 2003 concluded that there is a clear evidence of association between use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals and antimicrobial resistance in human.

The same joint tripartite expert meeting concluded that resistance to some classes of antimicrobials is worse than others. To guide Member States in their decision making, WHO has developed a list of critically important antimicrobials (WHO CIA list) to identify which classes of antimicrobials are the most critically important for human health.

WHO has recently commissioned systematic reviews and literature reviews that were presented to a multidisciplinary group of experts to develop science-based recommendations on the use of medically important antimicrobials in food-producing animals. The ultimate aim of these guidelines are to preserve the effectiveness of medically important antimicrobials for public health.

WHO is also promoting integrated surveillance of AMR taking a “One Health” approach through a variety of activities including development of guidance documents and protocols widely disseminated through training workshops and pilot projects.

WHO very much welcome the opportunity to work with all of you in the coming years to address one of the most urgent public health threats by providing further guidance to our Member States for containing AMR from the food chain to protect public Health.