

REPORT OF  
THE THIRD MEETING OF  
DIRECTORS OF  
WHO COLLABORATING CENTRES  
FOR TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

BEIJING, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

23-26 October 1995

*Sponsored by the World Health Organization  
in association with the  
State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine  
of the People's Republic of China*



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

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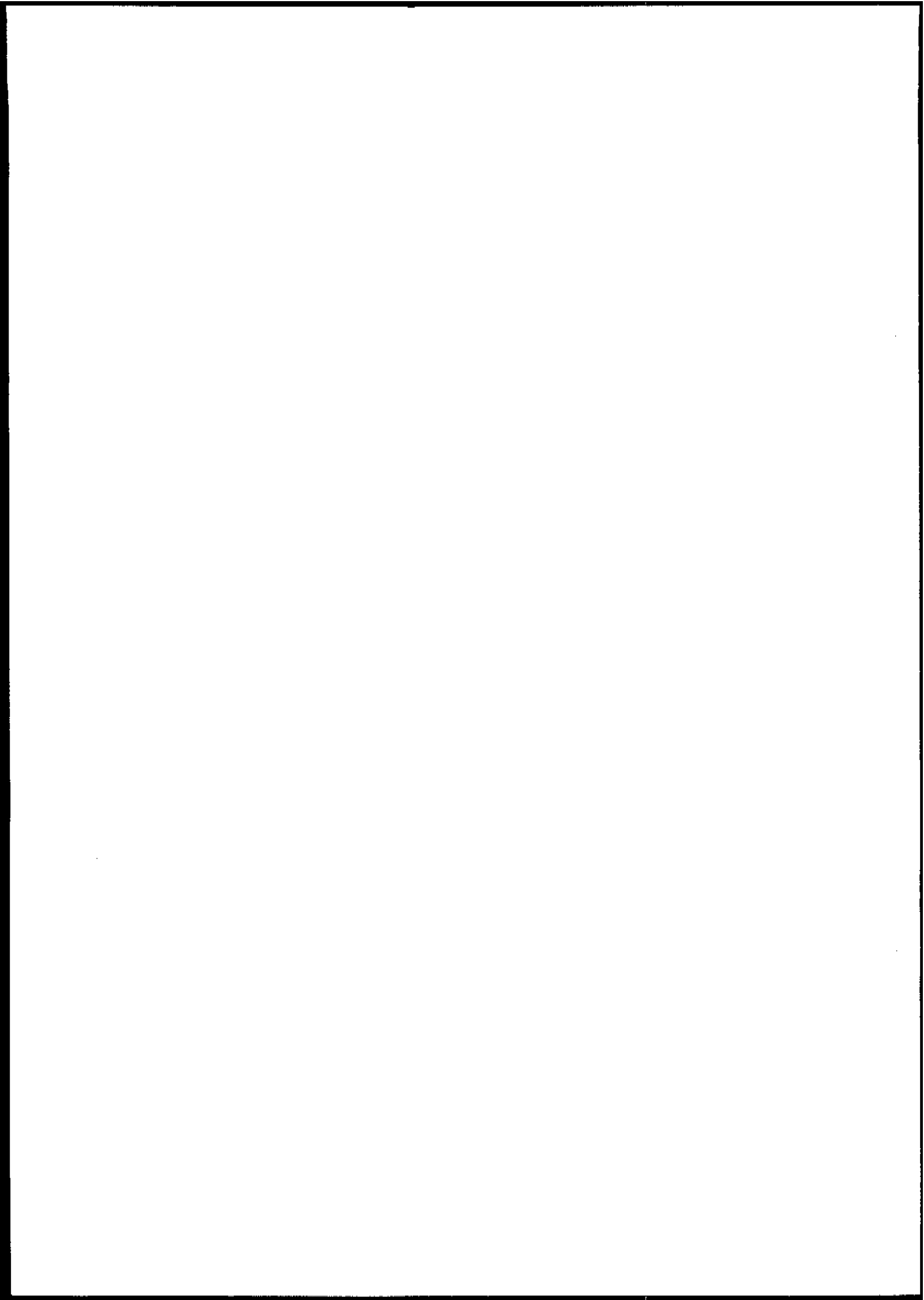
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## INTRODUCTION

The Third Meeting of Directors of WHO Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine was held at Beijing, People's Republic of China, from 23 to 26 October 1995.

The purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss activities, progress, problems, needs, developments and plans for future work.

At the meeting, 19 of the 25 Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine were represented. Unfortunately, for reasons of financial stringency, not all those invited were able to attend. Participants, including Observers and Members of the WHO secretariat are listed in Annex 1.

The meeting was held at the Beijing Grace Hotel. At the opening ceremony, an address of welcome was given by Dr Zhang Wenkang, Vice-Minister of Public Health and Director-General, State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine. The inaugural address was delivered by Dr Fernando S. Antezana, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization, who formally opened the meeting.

An account of recent research and developments in Traditional Chinese Medicine in China was then given by Dr Shen Zhixiang, Director, Department of Foreign Affairs, State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

This was followed by a general introduction to the meeting by Dr Xiaorui Zhang of the WHO Traditional Medicine Programme, and by the nomination of Dr Xiao Peigen as Chairman, Dr Keita Arouna as Vice-Chairman, and Dr N.R. Farnsworth as Rapporteur.

Subsequently, the meeting proceeded with series of presentations on activities in traditional medicine in three WHO Regions, and at the Collaborating Centres represented.

These presentations were followed on the second day by discussions on the role of the Collaborating Centres and their work plans for the next four years, on strengthening cooperation between these Centres and WHO, and on collaboration between the Centres themselves.

The third day was devoted to a consideration of the conclusions and recommendations of participants, and to concluding remarks by Dr Xiaorui Zhang.

On the fourth and final day, visits were made to four institutions in Beijing, namely: the Hospital of the Beijing College of Acupuncture and Traumatology; the Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine; the Institute of Acupuncture and the Institute of Information on Traditional Chinese Medicine of the China Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

The schedule of the meeting is given in Annex 2.

## ADDRESS OF WELCOME

Dr Zhang Wenkang <sup>1</sup>

Honourable Assistant Director-General of WHO, Dr Antezana,  
My guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Today, at this Third Meeting of Directors of WHO Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine convened in Beijing, on behalf of the Chinese Ministry of Health and the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine and as a private individual, I would like to express my sincere congratulations to the meeting and extend a warm welcome to Assistant Director-General Dr Antezana, the honoured Directors and guests, and all participants at the meeting.

The Chinese State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, entrusted by WHO to host this meeting of Directors of Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine, is greatly honoured in doing so. The meeting is a distinguished event in the circles of traditional medicine and pharmacy, which provides an excellent opportunity for the various centres to exchange experience and learn from each other, and is of great significance in further stimulating collaboration in these fields throughout the world and in promoting the development of traditional medicine and pharmacy. Convening the meeting in Beijing makes it easier for the Chinese profession of traditional medicine to learn from friends coming from other parts of the world, and to make use of their good experience and practices, so as to develop further traditional medicine and pharmacy in China.

Many countries in the world have their own form of traditional medicine. Not only has traditional medicine played an important historical role in the multiplication and prosperity of the human race, it is still of significance as a real force through its use by the people of some countries for preventing and treating disease and providing health care.

To achieve its strategic goal of "health for all", the World Health Organization has paid great attention to the development of traditional medicine, successively designating 25 Institutions as WHO Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine, so as to make full use of their scientific expertise. Such centres have played a useful role in promoting and stimulating the development of traditional medicine in countries throughout the world.

The Chinese Government lays great emphasis on and fully confirms the scientific value, historical contribution, significant practical importance and role of traditional medicine and pharmacy. It is stipulated in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China "to develop modern medicine and the traditional medicine of our country", and the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine has been specifically established to control traditional medicine and pharmacy at the national level, providing a legal and organizational guarantee for their development. Traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacy have been integrated into national programmes for socio-economic development as a governmental action, and a series of principles and policies, such as "giving equal emphasis to modern and traditional medicine", have been established to protect them and provide a strong stimulus to their development. At present, a system for medical care, education and research with a relatively rational layout and involving a fairly comprehensive range of disciplines has been established, together with a newborn industry for the large-scale production of traditional Chinese medicines and a nation-wide network for their distribution.

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<sup>1</sup> Vice-Minister of Public Health and Director-General, State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Beijing, People's Republic of China

The underlying thinking for the development of traditional medicine and pharmacy in China is to comply with the developmental pattern and peculiarities of traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacy while fully exploiting their characteristics and advantages and, at the same time, to utilize advanced scientific technology and modern means to promote their integration with modern science. The seven WHO Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine in China are operating on the basis of such thinking. In recent years, certain progress has been made in research on the basic theory of traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacy, the development of traditional Chinese preparations, and the dissemination and application of non-medication therapies.

In the future, as in the past, we will continue to support the work of WHO's Programme for Traditional Medicine, and further strengthen our relationship with WHO and our cooperation with professional circles in traditional medicine from other countries. I am sure that this Meeting of Directors of WHO Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine will increase concern, attention and support for traditional medicine and pharmacy in all countries, and will enhance friendship and understanding among colleagues from different countries, leading to the further development of traditional medicine and pharmacy world-wide and to a larger number of joint contributions to the health of humankind.

Thank you.

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Dr Fernando S. Antezana <sup>1</sup>

Honourable Dr Zhang Wenkang, Vice-Minister of Public Health,  
Director-General of the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine,  
Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is for me an honour and special privilege to welcome you to this Third Meeting of Directors of WHO Collaborating Centres for Traditional Medicine and to address such a distinguished group of scientists and public health officials.

I should first of all like to transmit to you the greetings of the Director-General, Dr Hiroshi Nakajima. I should also like to extend our thanks to the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Ministry of Public Health and the State Administration for Traditional Chinese Medicine for their collaboration and support which have made this meeting possible.

As you all know, the WHO Collaborating Centres are the technical backbone of the Organization. They are the world-wide technical network in the different areas of WHO's work, which provides the Secretariat and Member States with fundamental technical inputs, which are a result of the research and experience that these Collaborating Centres put at the disposal of health care systems in different economic, social and cultural contexts.

Over the past decade, interest has revived in the study and use of traditional systems of medicine in different cultural settings. As a result, countries have sought cooperation from WHO in identifying and using the safe and positive elements of traditional medicine in national health systems.

WHO is aware that many elements of traditional medicine are beneficial, but others are not, and some are definitely harmful. In this respect, the Organization encourages and supports countries to identify and provide safe and effective remedies and practices for use in the public and private health services. However, this does not amount to a blind endorsement of all forms of traditional medicine. WHO's role is to ensure that traditional medicine is examined critically and with an open mind.

Both WHO and many of its Member States have sought to foster a realistic and pragmatic approach to the subject. This has ensured progress in the Programme's primary objective of linking proven, useful traditional practices and modern scientific medicine within the national health system.

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