

The 29th CMAAO General Assembly was held September 24-26, 2014, in Manila, Philippines, with about 70 delegates in attendance from 13 member NMAs.

The main topic of the symposium was “Health Database in an Information Society.” While the situations and issues differ among the member nations, this challenge is rapidly becoming more significant in each society. As individual physicians and as members of NMAs, our efforts in this field face increasing difficulties.

This is why the WMA decided to establish a working group for ethical guidelines on this subject, and thereby promote the development of a certain harmony beyond the Declaration of Helsinki, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary in November 2014.

At the CMAAO Assembly, we welcomed important guests as keynote speakers—namely, the WMA President Dr. Margaret Mungherera and the American Medical Association President Dr. Robert Wah. Both underscored the importance of ongoing discussion regarding the ethical aspects of information technology development in the health area for domains such as the CMAAO and the WMA. The Assembly provided a good opportunity to collectively review

and discuss the issues our region faces regarding information technology and the pros and cons of health databases. We are happy to have reached some common ground and adopted our resolution.

Since the WHO Western Pacific Region (WPRO) has an office in Manila, we were able to invite main officers to the meeting and have fruitful exchanges encompassing broad perspectives. We are grateful to Dr. Nishikiori from the WPRO for giving a special presentation on multidrug-resistant tuberculosis at the request of delegates from the Indian Medical Association.

It is true that viruses and microorganisms do not pose as much risk as they once did. However, as made clear by Dr. Nishikiori’s presentation, as well as recent events such as the Ebola outbreak, the battle is not over. We rely on advanced methodologies and must develop systems to prepare for not only old diseases but also new threats that emerge from remote local areas in distant regions.

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