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The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) presents her compliments to Member States and has the honor to refer to the Sixty-eighth World Health Assembly call on Member States *“to implement appropriate containment of type 2 wild polioviruses in essential facilities by the end of 2015 and of type 2 Sabin poliovirus within three months of global withdrawal of the type 2 component in oral poliovirus vaccine in April 2016.”*

On 20 September 2015, the Global Commission for the Certification of Eradication of Poliomyelitis declared that wild poliovirus type 2 (WPV2) has been eradicated. The Director-General would like to emphasize the crucial role of each Member State in leading efforts in their respective country to minimize the risk of reintroduction of WPV2 into their population from facilities that still hold WPV2 materials.

On 20 October 2015, the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization (SAGE) confirmed that the globally coordinated withdrawal of oral polio vaccines containing the type 2 component will take place between 17 April and 1 May 2016. Preparation for this milestone includes the destruction or appropriate containment of any remaining WPV2 materials by the end of 2015.

The destruction of unneeded WPV2 materials is strongly encouraged. Member States planning to retain WPV2 materials for vaccine production, research, or other critical activities, must designate poliovirus-essential facilities to handle and store these WPV2 materials, and ensure that these designated facilities fully implement the poliovirus containment measures described in the *“WHO global action plan to minimize poliovirus facility-associated risk after type-specific eradication of wild polioviruses and sequential cessation of OPV use”* (GAPIII). These Member States must then certify containment against GAPIII. Certification guidance is provided in the *“WHO Containment Certification Scheme”* (CCS).

The following specific steps must be taken by all 194 Member States **by the end of 2015**:

- complete a national inventory of facilities that handle or store WPV2 infectious or potentially infectious materials;
- ensure the destruction of all unneeded WPV2 materials;
- report the completion of these activities to the WHO Regional Commission for the Certification of the Eradication of Poliomyelitis (RCC).

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The few countries planning to retain needed WPV2 materials must take the following additional steps **by the end of 2015**:

- establish a National Authority for Containment (NAC) that will be responsible for the national certification of poliovirus containment;
- officially inform the RCC of the designation of poliovirus-essential facilities.

In 2016, the NACs in countries with designated poliovirus-essential facilities will have to certify that these facilities appropriately implement the poliovirus containment requirements described in GAPIII.

The Director-General of the World Health Organization takes this opportunity to renew to Member States the assurance of her highest consideration.

GENEVA, 12 November 2015