



**AGREEMENT TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH CENTRE TO COORDINATE
THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF AVIAN INFLUENZA AND OTHER TRANSBOUNDARY
ANIMAL DISEASES IN NORTH AFRICA**

AGREEMENT BETWEEN

THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

AND

THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

BACKGROUND

Whereas, in April of 2007, the OIE and the Government of Tunisia decided to set up an OIE Sub-regional Representation in Tunisia.

Whereas, since November of 2005, FAO has been financing a regional cooperation programme (TCP) to provide emergency assistance for the early detection and prevention of avian influenza in the Maghreb region. This programme is being now complemented by a two year regional project for the strengthening of surveillance and control of avian influenza funded by the Government of Spain.

Whereas, in 2004, the FAO and the OIE signed an agreement setting up the GF-TADs (Global Framework for Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases). This initiative is designed to combine the experience and expertise of the two organizations in the control of transboundary diseases so as to strengthen the capacities of developing countries and help them establish prevention and control programmes for specific transboundary animal diseases according to the priorities in each region.

Whereas the complementary nature of the mandates implemented by FAO and OIE, in particular to improve animal health in the Maghreb countries and thereby contribute to poverty alleviation has formed the basis for a long-standing collaboration, which is to be maintained within the framework of the GF-TAD's programme.

Whereas the high risk of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) due to the virus H5N1 spreading to other countries and territories led the two organizations to draw up a formal agreement to establish an operational Regional Animal Health Centre aimed at ensuring better coordination of their activities. In consideration of the above, the parties hereby agree as follows:

1. PURPOSE OF THE REGIONAL CENTRE

The parties to this agreement hereby establish the OIE/FAO Regional Animal Health Centre. The purpose of the OIE FAO Regional Animal Health Centre is to provide a framework for the

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coordination and harmonization of strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of activities related to the prevention and control of avian influenza and other transboundary animal diseases in the region.

The Centre shall be located in the offices of the FAO Sub-Regional Office for North Africa (SNEA) in Tunis.

For the purpose of this Agreement, FAO shall allocate office space to the OIE within the premises provided by the Government of Tunisia to FAO for the FAO Sub-Regional Representation in Tunis.

2. MODUS OPERANDI

The organizations involved in this agreement, within the Centre, maintain their core mandate and implement their respective projects and programmes, while avoiding gaps and duplications. Collaborative activities shall be drawn up as common projects upon request or identified needs.

Synergies between the mandate and activities of the OIE and the FAO in the North African Region will be identified and project proposals on issues within the organizations' capacities shall be prepared and submitted for funding.

The parties signatory to the establishment of the Centre undertake to share all relevant information concerning the fulfillment of this joint mission.

The FAO Sub-Regional Representation for North Africa will provide permanent secretariat functions for the Centre.

As soon as the organizations involved sign the agreement on the Centre and the host country endorses it, the parties will prepare a quarterly programme of activities in Tunis, defining activities to be undertaken and missions to be carried out.

As appropriate, representatives of the Parties shall meet to evaluate the implementation of this Agreement.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF ROLES BETWEEN THE INSTITUTIONS

Taking into account the inherent experience of each of the institutions, flexible orientations have been selected regarding their special areas of intervention and their areas of added value.

Special areas of intervention for the OIE

- Evaluation of the Veterinary Services to help Governments and donor agencies target their investments in the field of animal health
- Capacity building of OIE Delegates and their staff (focal points for animal health information, wildlife diseases, animal welfare, aquatic animal diseases and veterinary medicinal products and vaccines)
- Actions aimed at improving the disease notification system and animal welfare activities
- Dissemination of animal health information
- Harmonization and technical monitoring of emergency response plans
- Support to regional and international trade of animals and animal products
- Support to national laboratories to become Reference Laboratories whenever relevant

Special areas of intervention for the FAO

- Investigations into the OIE of migratory birds in the spread of avian influenza
- Training in laboratory diagnosis and support for regional networks of laboratories and epidemiological surveillance teams
- Support for feasibility studies for national and regional investment programmes
- Provision of technical assistance, both for the Centre and at a national level to support the implementation of programmes
- Support for the development of national and regional avian influenza and other transboundary animal diseases control strategies.

Common areas of intervention

- Definition of control strategies
- Preparation of investment programmes for sustainable strengthening of the Veterinary Services
- Preparation of a regional avian influenza control programme
- Support for laboratories
- Dissemination of technical information
 - Public awareness and information campaigns
 - Monitoring and evaluation of actions in the field
 - Harmonization of emergency response plans
 - Support for the development of national and regional avian influenza and other transboundary animal diseases control strategies
 - Networking and exchange of data and information with other regions
 - Support for the development of control programmes for transboundary diseases and their sub-regional and regional coordination, and for associated training

4. HUMAN RESOURCES

For the purposes of this Agreement, the parties shall strive to provide the following human resources:

OIE:

- 1 veterinarian specialist in institutional matters, audit and training
- 2 specialist trainers, including one for electronic information systems (one English-speaking and one French-speaking)
- 1 Administrative and financial officer
- 1 trilingual secretary.

FAO:

- 1 Veterinarian economist
- 1 Epidemiologist specializing in monitoring projects relating to migratory birds
- 1 Programme officer 



- 1 Veterinarian responsible for monitoring projects relating to regional networks of laboratories and surveillance teams.

Additional human resources requirements

To fulfil the aforementioned missions, the team at the Centre will be backed up by additional staff as agreed from time to time by the parties on an ad hoc basis. Requirements for short term consultants will be defined as the need arises, but will necessarily include clearly defined Terms of Reference with the aim of developing knowledge and skills within the North African Countries.

5. MISCELLANEOUS

The obligations of OIE and FAO under this Agreement, in particular the provision of human resources, shall be subject to the availability of funds, including any necessary extra-budgetary resources.

FAO and OIE shall agree on appropriate cost-sharing arrangements concerning the use of office space and related expenses by OIE staff on the premises of the FAO Sub-Regional Representation for North Africa.

Any dispute between the parties shall be settled through negotiation.

This Agreement may be terminated by either party upon a three month written notice to the other party. In that event, the parties shall consult with each other to agree on measures for the orderly conclusion of ongoing activities.

Nothing in this Agreement or in any document or activity related thereto shall be construed as a waiver of any privileges and immunities of FAO or OIE.

The present Agreement will start at the date of the signature by the two parties. It will remain valid until the signature of an FAO/OIE/AU-IBAR Tripartite Agreement related to the Regional Animal Health Centres in Africa. The Tripartite Agreement will replace the bilateral FAO OIE previous agreement in all its articles.

For the OIE,

For the FAO,

Bernard Vallat
Director General
World Organisation for Animal Health
OIE

Modibo T. Traoré
Assistant Director-General
Agriculture and Consumer Protection
Department
Food & Agriculture Organization of the United
Nations - FAO

Done on 4 March 2009

Done on 23/02/2009

ENDORSEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA, REPRESENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Whereas on 13 January 2009, the OIE and the Government of Tunisia signed an Agreement for the establishment of an OIE Sub-regional Representation in Tunisia.

Whereas on 3 August 2006 the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of Tunisia signed an Agreement for the establishment of the FAO Sub-regional Representation for North Africa in Tunis.

The Government of Tunisia, acknowledges and endorses the signature of the bilateral agreement between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Animal Health Organisation (OIE) for the establishment of the Regional Animal Health Centre for Northern Africa to be hosted in the premises provide by the Government of Tunisia to the Sub-Regional Representation of FAO for North Africa.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENT

The Ministry of Agriculture shall provide appropriate facilities and logistical support as required and agreed between the Parties.

The Government of Tunisia shall extend the privileges and immunities to the staff of OIE as contained in the agreement between the OIE and the Government of Tunisia signed on 13 January 2009.

Nothing in this Agreement or in any document or activity related thereto shall be construed as a waiver of the privileges and immunities of FAO or of OIE.

For the Government of Tunisia

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