



RESOLUTION:

ACHIEVING A COMMON PROTOCOL AGAINST ZIKA VIRUS

Adopted at the YEPP Council, Budapest, Hungary, on the 5th of March 2016

Recognising:

- Zika is an emerging viral disease transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito from the Aedes genus, mainly Aedes aegypti in tropical regions, and is the same mosquito that transmits dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.
- Zika was first isolated in the Zika forest, Uganda, in 1947, and the first major outbreak occurred in Micronesia, in the Island of Yap, affecting 185 people, when the probable vector was identified as being the Aedes mosquito, although the presence of the virus could not be definitively determined.
- Zika outbreaks are currently occurring in many countries and territories. According to the PAHO, twenty countries have already detected Zika¹, and it alerts it is rapidly growing, and that it will possibly affect all Latin American countries,
- As the virus spreads in Latin American countries, the risk of infected travellers entering Europe is increasing.
- Before 2015, Zika virus disease (Zika) outbreaks occurred in areas of Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands.

¹ Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guadeloupe, Guatemala, Guyana, French Guiana, Haiti, Honduras, Martinique, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico*, Saint Martin, Surinam and Venezuela.

- Many cases have been already detected in Europe, being especially dangerous when affecting pregnant women².

Acknowledging:

- On the 7th of May 2015, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) issued an alert regarding the first confirmed Zika virus infections identified in Brazil³.
- On the 1st of February 2016, the World Health Organization declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) because of clusters of microcephaly and other neurological disorders in some areas affected by the virus⁴.
- Some regional and national EU governments have already established emergency surveillance protocols. The evidence of a link between Zika virus and microcephaly shown by scientists from Slovenia, Brazil and the US in the papers published in The New England Journal of Medicine and Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report on 10th February 2016.
- There is no specific treatment, prophylaxis, or any vaccine currently available.

YEPP calls on:

- The International Community to urge the corresponding agencies and international bodies to accelerate research on eradicating the mosquito that spreads the virus, be aware of the international threat it poses to global health, and urge the corresponding agencies and international bodies to accelerate research into a vaccine, as well as conduct studies to learn more about the potential consequences.
- The European Union and the governments of its Member States to guarantee the safety of their citizens, by swiftly adopting a common protocol against the Zika virus, including an improvement of the epidemiologic surveillance systems, as well as the elaboration of a programme focusing on the holistic management of the virus vector from the diagnostic

² The arrival of the virus has been associated with an increase in the birth of babies with abnormally small heads and in cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome. <http://ec.europa.eu/health/zika/>

³ Epidemiological Alert. Zika virus infection.

http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&Itemid=270&gid=30075

⁴ WHO statement on the first meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR 2005) Emergency Committee on Zika virus and observed increase in neurological disorders and neonatal malformations: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2016/1st-emergency-committee-zika/en/>

phase (considering the environmental conditions favouring and assessment measures to minimise the risk.

- The EU governments to monitor and report cases of infection, in order to contribute to a better understanding regarding the spread of the virus.
- NGOs operating in the most affected areas to educate the population at risk in order to help prevent the transmission.
- The EU governments to publish travel-related notices and any other kind of guidance so citizens are aware of the potential risks to which they may be exposed, this includes advising travellers coming back to Europe, taking into consideration that the virus is possibly sexually transmissible