

During the 69th World Health Assembly in Geneva global leaders have reaffirmed commitment to ending polio once and for all

Last week, global political commitment to eradicating polio was affirmed at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva. During the polio agenda item, member states discussed progress made in the last year and the remaining hurdles that stand in the way of polio eradication.

In her opening address to the WHA, Dr Margaret Chan, Director General of WHO, said polio eradication has never been so close to the finish line. "During the short span of 2 weeks in April, 155 countries successfully switched from trivalent to bivalent oral polio vaccine, marking the largest coordinated vaccine withdrawal in history. I thank you and your country teams for this marvellous feat," she said.

Member states reviewed the latest global epidemiology, noting the strong progress made across Africa with no case of wild poliovirus in approaching two years. Delegates from Afghanistan and Pakistan, the final remaining polio endemic countries, outlined the steps they are taking to ensure that transmission is interrupted as a matter of urgency. With fewer missed children than ever before and just 74 cases across the two in 2015, achieving eradication has never appeared to be such an achievable target.

Global leaders commit to polio eradication at World Health Assembly Wednesday 10th of April 2024 08:49:35 PM