



6th September 2015

Fellow Rotarians and friends of Rotary

On 11 August this year the world marked an important milestone in our fight against Polio: **one full year without a single case of polio caused by wild poliovirus in Africa**. Not long before that, exactly on 27 March 2014, India made it against all odds to be certified a Polio-free country. With this great achievement, Rotarians prove again that our beautiful dream to finally eradicate polio is coming to be true sooner than many experts anticipated. In addition to saving numerous children and families the suffering of this crippling disease along with savings of millions if not billions of dollars in treatment and care, this accomplishment also means new opportunity and growth for many communities everywhere across the globe. The success in India and Nigeria will certainly bring a lot of ideas and lessons to be shared for the hard-hitting journey in the remaining two Polio endemic countries –Pakistan and Afghanistan.

the commitment of Rotarians worldwide to eradicating Polio demonstrates the vital role we play in improving global health; our partnerships with governments, civil society, and private sector institutions in delivering services to the underprivileged masses, shows how collectively we can end a terrible disease such as polio. In 1986 Rotary initiated this comprehensive movement to end Polio and has today, with other stakeholders including WHO, CDC, UNICEF, and Gates Foundation in addition to local governments brought the world to the point of becoming Polio-free. Yet it is important to recall the words of Rotary International President, R. Ravindran: *We have stopped polio in Africa. Yet this progress, momentous as it is, is still fragile. As long as polio exists in the two remaining endemic countries of Pakistan and Afghanistan, the virus still has the potential to spread and to spark new outbreaks*. Now, more than ever, we need the power of all of Rotary having presence in over 205 countries, and with a common goal to serve to continue this duty through to the end, to a polio-free world.

No matter wherever we live, whether our country has been polio-free or not, we have to work hand in hand with every Rotarian and with any Rotary contributing our support in the field, providing financial support or advocating our role among the public. No better example to tell other than the comprehensive and crucial mobilization of those countries belonging to District 2452 of upon the announcement of the outbreak of Polio virus in Syria in October 2013. Rotarians in Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine, stimulated by their determination to maintain high level engagement with the Rotary's Polio Plus program and to help reaching children everywhere with life-saving vaccine stood ready and up to the call. Together with other partners, the virus was eliminated in record time.

Fellow Rotarians and friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you together with the Rotary International President Elect, John Germ and his wife Judith in Beirut, Lebanon, one of nine stars representing our Rotary District 2452 to celebrate Rotary's 30th Anniversary of Polio Plus program. It is our chance again to meet and to listen to experienced and prominent speakers from Global Polio Eradication Initiative Partners

Ahl wa sahlān

Yours in Rotary



Mustafa Nasereddin
District 2452 Governor