

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 906
(I-11)

Introduced by: International Medical Graduates Section
Subject: Improvement in Sources of Drinking Water
Referred to: Reference Committee K
(D. Robert McCaffree, MD, Chair)

1 Whereas, A cholera epidemic caused severe morbidity and significant mortality on the already
2 devastated population of Haiti; and
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4 Whereas, Etiology of the outbreak has been scientifically proven and linked to the strain of
5 Vibrio cholera related to UN soldiers arriving from Katmandu, Nepal between October 8 and
6 October 12, 2010 at the MINUSTHA Camp in Mirebalais, Haiti;¹ and
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8 Whereas, Consequences of inadequate waste and sewage management are well known and
9 procedures for their prevention are international standards clearly delineated and elaborately
10 described in the US Army Sanitation Field Manual;² and
11
12 Whereas, The United Nations Final Report (05/05/11) documented that the "evidence
13 overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that the source of the Haiti cholera outbreak was due to
14 contamination of the Meye Tributary of the Artibonite River"; and
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16 Whereas, Unsanitary and inadequate waste management at the Minustha (i.e. UN soldiers)
17 Camp additionally contributed to the massive contamination of a major water source for the
18 population; and
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20 Whereas, Ensuing tragic mortality and morbidity labeled "Mass Murder" by the Journal
21 "Le Monde" significantly burdened health and financial means in a country of already sparse
22 resources; therefore be it
23
24 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association lobby the World Health Organization,
25 World Medical Association and the United Nations to support the Association of Haitian
26 Physicians Abroad's recommendations to significantly improve the sources of drinking water in
27 Haiti. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Minimal - less than \$1,000.

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¹ Dec 2010, report of French Team Epidemiologic Investigation; CDD Press Release Nov 2010; New England Journal of Medicine 2011; 364:33-42)

² US Army FM 4-25.12 and (FM 21-10-1)

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

H-135.943 Expansion of Hazardous Waste Landfills Over Aquifers - Our AMA: (1) recognizes that the expansion of hazardous waste landfills or the construction of new hazardous waste landfills over principal aquifers represents a potential health risk for the public water supply and is inconsistent with sound principles of public health policy, and therefore should be opposed; (2) will advocate for the continued monitoring of groundwater sources, including principal aquifers, that may be contaminated by hazardous waste landfill or other landfill leachate; and (3) supports efforts to improve hazardous waste treatment, recycling, and disposal methods in order to reduce the public health burden. (CSAPH Rep. 4, A-07)

H-135.947 Guidance for Worldwide Conservation of Potable Water - Our AMA favors scientific and cultural development of a plan for worldwide potable water conservation. (Res. 406, A-04)

H-440.972 Water Fluoridation - Our AMA: (1) urges state health departments to consider the value of requiring statewide fluoridation (preferably a comprehensive program of fluoridation of all public water supplies, where these are fluoride deficient), and to initiate such action as deemed appropriate; and (2) supports the 2011 proposed fluoridation standards as promulgated by the US Department of Health and Human Services and the Environmental Protection Agency. (Sub. Res. 9, I-86; Reaffirmed: Sunset Report, I-96; Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 3, A-06; Appended: Res 406, A-11)