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Zoom On: Dr. Margaret Chan - WHO Director General



Dr. Margaret Chan

*****@***who.int

Director-General - World Health Organization

Dr. Margaret Chan Fung Fu-chun is the Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO). She has previously served as Director of Health in the Hong Kong Government, representative of the WHO Director-General for Pandemic Influenza and WHO Assistant Director-General for Communicable Diseases. As of 2014, Forbes has ranked Dr. Chan as the 30th most powerful woman in the world.

Dr. Chan has played an important role during her tenure as director. She launched new services to prevent the spread of disease and to promote better health. She has been the driving force behind the introduction of new initiatives to improve communicable disease surveillance and response, enhance training for public health professionals and better local and international collaboration. In addition, Dr. Chan effectively managed outbreaks of avian influenza and SARS during her tenure as the Director of WHO.

Dr. Chan has a wealth of experience and a global perspective in public health. Over the years, she has established an excellent reputation and is a highly respected public health official. Dr. Chan has in-depth knowledge and international experience. She is an expert in communicable diseases, health regulation, environmental health and chronic disease.

Dr. Chan is a true visionary with first-hand experience in dealing with the challenge of emerging infection disease. She has played a dynamic role in strengthening preparedness for human pandemic influenza and has demonstrated outstanding leadership in combating the avian influenza outbreak in 1997 and the SARS outbreak in 2003.

Dr. Chan has also been instrumental in directing the work of WHO in the Protection of the Human Environment. This included a focus on aspects of human health and quality of life that are determined by physical, chemical, biological, social and psychosocial environmental factors. She has been very vocal about focusing on key areas of health such as water and sanitation, radiation and chemical safety, indoor and outdoor pollution and occupational health.

Dr. Chan has also been in the forefront of introducing preventive and promotive health care services for children, adolescents, women, men and the elderly. She has also been involved in the formulation and implementation of health policies including disease surveillance and response, training of public health physicians and healthcare professionals, the improvement of public health laboratory capacities, the creation of an information system for evidence-based policy options, setting up of a regulatory framework for traditional Chinese medicine and the strengthening of both local and international collaboration.

Dr. Chan was awarded an OBE by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1997. She was also conferred Fellowship of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians in the same year. His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand conferred on her the Prince Mahidol Award in the field of Public Health in 1999. She was also granted an honorary degree of Doctor of Science in 1999 by the University of Western Ontario, Canada.

Sources: Wikipedia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, World Health Organization, Forbes.

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