

**Second Planning Meeting of  
the Steering Committee of  
the Middle East Association For Managing Hearing Loss (MEHA)**

May 15, 2000

**FINAL REPORT**

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING (Agenda item 1)

1.1 The chairman of the meeting, His Royal Highness, Prince Firas bin Raad, Patron of the Association, welcomed the dignitaries, participants, and observers to the Second Planning Meeting of the Steering Committee, held at the Schneider Children's Medical Centre of Israel in Petah Tikvah, Israel.

1.2 The list of participants is given in Appendix A.

1.3 HRH Prince Firas commented on the role of face-to-face meetings in reaching the ultimate goal of reconciliation in the Region and the contributions of MEHA in this regard.

1.4 The chairman invited His Excellency, Ambassador Bell (Canada) and Ambassador Abileah (Israel) to address the meeting.

1.5 Ambassador Bell expressed his pleasure in participating in the MEHA meeting. He emphasized the interest and role of Canada and its NGO community in supporting regional cooperation in the Middle East. He also commented on the active role of the Canada International Scientific Exchange Program (CISEPO) in creating regional ties, and on the successes of MEHA in developing people-to-people dialogue that "sinks the roots of peace into society". He identified the intention of Canada to continue its support of CISEPO and MEHA in the future.

1.6 Ambassador Abileah of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel (MASHAV) identified MEHA as re-enforcing the process of individuals, organizations, and countries seeking peace. He commented on CISEPO's accomplishments in peacebuilding activities to date and promised the continuation of MASHAV's assistance to CISEPO and MEHA.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA (Agenda item 2)

2.1 The meeting was invited to comment on the agenda.

2.2 The agenda was adopted as reproduced in Appendix B.

### 3. STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Agenda item 3)

3.1 The Chairman introduced and welcomed the new members of the Steering Committee, Prof. Ziad Abdeen and Dr. Faleh Al Nasser; the Adviser to the Steering Committee, Dr. Yousef Gousous; and the Executive Assistant to the Patron, Dr. M. Al Omari. The new member of the Operating Committee, Mrs. Rema Othman Jebara, also was welcomed and introduced as were the representatives of the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

3.2 The Chairman invited the members of the Steering Committee: Dr. Abbadi (representing Dr. Al Nasser), Prof. Abdeen, Prof. Noyek, and Dr. Shalit each to address the meeting. The four members of the Steering Committee indicated their satisfaction with the progress of MEHA during the past year, the need to consolidate this progress, and the unlimited potential for regional cooperation through MEHA's projects. It was identified that MEHA had the power and the duty to develop cooperative partnerships with members' respective governments and national institutes.

### 4. OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORT (Agenda item 4)

4.1 The Operating Committee reported on its activities for the 1999-2000 period which, inter alia, included: program planning and coordination, finalizing experimental design and methodology for Projects 1, 7, and 8, developing a MEHA Travel Policy, reviewing a proposal for the MEHA Regional Centre, and confirming that MEHA's "First International Congress of Audiology, Otology, and Auditory Rehabilitation Conference" would be held in Amman, July 16-18, 2001.

4.2 Full reports from the Operating Committee meetings held October 1999 and February 2000 are available on request.

4.3 General discussion identified a number of points which will strengthen MEHA's ability to fulfill its objectives, including:

- New projects should be developed which reflect the needs in the Palestinian Authority;
- Projects should be designed to ensure continuity of service at their completion by involving appropriate government and other agencies;

4.4 The need for Operating Committee and other members to be considered "on-duty" when they are travelling to meet MEHA requirements and/or participating in MEHA programs was identified. Continuing financial support by primary employers is needed. The Chairman indicated his support for the concept and requested that Steering Committee members consider the proposal positively.

4.5 The MEHA Travel Policy, appearing as Appendix C to this report, was approved with the understanding that future modifications to it may be required.

4.6 A previous Steering Committee decision that habilitation requirements and costs likely to be identified through project activity should be estimated and included in initial project planning was emphasized.

4.7 The Report of the Operating Committee was accepted by the meeting.

5. THE MEHA REGIONAL CENTRE (Agenda item 5)

5.1 Progress in establishing the MEHA Regional Centre, Amman was described. The official opening of the Centre is scheduled for May 16, 2000.

5.2 Considerable discussion took place regarding the official name for the Centre and its mission and functions.

5.3 The name for the Centre will be reviewed by the Patron in consultation with CISEPO. It was suggested that for fund raising purposes, it should be possible to identify the Centre as being "in memory of King Hussein". The Steering Committee will be kept advised regarding the name of the Centre.

5.4 It was further proposed that the Centre assume coordinating, administrative, and fund raising functions for MEHA programs and projects. Clinical or diagnostic procedures, training programs, research, community services, etc. should only be undertaken by the Centre when they are integral to MEHA projects approved by the Steering Committee.

5.5 The Operating Committee was requested to develop revised terms of reference for the Centre with input from the Chair.

6. MEHA FINANCIAL REVIEW 1999-2000 (Agenda item 6)

6.1 Financial support for MEHA for the 1999/2000 operating year was based on CISEPO's commitment of CND\$150,000 funding (approximately US\$100,000).

6.2 It was reported that CISEPO provided approximately CDN\$170,000 (US\$116,500) during the 1999/2000 fiscal year. Funding was allocated and expended in response to the direction of the Steering Committee at its June 8, 1999 meeting.

6.3 The Chair expressed the gratitude of the MEHA for CISEPO's generosity and for its continuing support of MEHA programs.

7. RESOURCING FOR MEHA (Agenda item 7)

7.1 Resourcing activities which are being pursued by CISEPO and by members of MEHA were identified.

7.2 The Chair identified options for funding MEHA which included: donors from within Jordan, regionally organized campaigns, international groups including governmental agencies, and international Foundations.

7.3 The Operating Committee was asked to consider mechanisms to ensure that the poor received preference for MEHA services and that these services, e.g. provision of hearing aids, are clearly identified in such a way that they contribute to peacebuilding.

## 8. MEHA 2000-2001 PROGRAM AND PROJECT PROPOSALS

8.1 The Steering Committee approved in principle the following projects, to be added to the list of those approved for the 1999-2000 period:

- The translation of public information material on hearing loss into Arabic;
- A two-three day developmental, educational and training program to be delivered at the MEHA Regional Centre;
- Acquisition of additional essential equipment for the MEHA Regional Centre, Amman;
- Research into the genetics of hearing impaired populations.

8.2 The latter project on genetics was considered a low priority and would be pursued in the short-term only if conditional funding is received for such a project.

8.3 The Operating Committee was requested to develop full project plans and costings for the approved plans.

8.4 As already agreed by the Steering Committee, new projects for MEHA that bring new, conditional funding with them may be passed directly to the Operating Committee for their assessment. If the Operating Committee agrees that the proposal meets MEHA objectives, the projects should be implemented without the need for Steering Committee review.

## 9. STEERING COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

9.1 The members of the Steering Committee identified the following issues for consideration as priorities by the Operating Committee:

- Investing in projects which meet Palestinian needs;
- Enhancing the CISEPO/MEHA web site to support the networking of MEHA partners and to permit access to relevant journals;
- Identifying and implementing means to enhance human resource capabilities in the field.

9.2 The Operating Committee was requested to develop a MEHA policy statement for “Universal Screening of Infants for Hearing Loss” which could be used in approaching governments, donors, potential partners, etc.

10. CLOSING OF THE MEETING (Agenda item 10)

10.1 The Steering Committee will meet in approximately 12 months time. An invitation was tendered by Dr. Abdeen to host the meeting in the Palestinian Authority.

10.2 The chairman thanked all the participants for moving the discussions ahead to productive conclusions.

10.3 The meeting closed at 13:30, May 15, 2000.

*Original Signed by  
Prince Firas*

*May 17, 2000*

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

His Royal Highness  
Prince Firas bin Raad  
Chair of the Meeting  
Patron of MEHA

Second Planning Meeting  
of the Steering Committee of  
the Middle East Association for Managing Hearing Loss (MEHA)

May 15, 2000

**MEETING PARTICIPANTS**

Chair of the Meeting

His Royal Highness, Prince Firas bin Raad of Jordan, Private Secretary to His Majesty the King for Health Affairs and Patron of MEHA

Steering Committee

Brigadier General, Dr. Mohammed Abbadi, Director, Field Medicine Directorate,  
Royal Medical Services, Jordan

Professor Ziad Abdeen, Coordinator Health Sciences Faculties and Dean of Research,  
Al Quds University

Professor Arnold Noyek, Chairman, the Isabel Silverman Canada International Scientific  
Exchange Program (CISEPO), Otolaryngologist-in-Chief, Mount Sinai Hospital,  
University of Toronto

Dr. Itamar Shalit, Director General, Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel

Operating Committee

Dr. Mohammad Al-Masri, Head, Department of Audiology, King Hussein Medical Centre, and  
Royal Medical Services, Jordan

Dr. Joseph Attias, Director, Institute for Clinical Neurophysiology and Audiology, Schneider  
Children's Medical Center of Israel

Mrs. Rema Othman Jebara, Faculty, Al Quds University; Audiologist/Speech Therapist,  
Hadassah Medical Organization

Executive Assistant to the Patron

Major General (Ret.) Dr. Mohammed Al-Omari, Otolaryngologist

Legal Adviser to the Patron

Professor, Dr. Walid Goussous

Adviser and Secretary to the Steering Committee

Mr. Phil Aber, CISEPO Policy and Planning Adviser

Secretary to the Operating Committee

Mrs. Ziva Caspi, Director of Public Relations, Schneider Children's Medical Center of Israel

Founding Committee for the MEHA Regional Centre

Dr. Yehudah Roth, Vice Chairman, Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, the Edith Wolfson Medical Centre, CISEPO Deputy Director, Israel

Dignitaries and Observers

Ambassador Benjamin Abileah , MASHAV (Israel)

Ms. Suheir Al-Badarneh, Palestine Red Crescent Society

Dr. Gader Al Fawaz, Assistant to HRH Prince Firas

Counsellor Mohammad El-Fayez, Jordanian Embassy, Tel Aviv

Ms. Manal Hamzeh, CCC-A, Rehabilitative Audiologist, Directress, Al Miran

Institute for Advanced Sciences in Hearing Balance and Communication

Ms. Hala Al-Hawari, Palestine Red Crescent Society

Dr. Salwan Baban F.A.C.S., Otolaryngologist

Dr. Khuloud Dajani, Associate Dean, School of Public Health, Al Quds University

Ambassador Michael Bell, Canadian Embassy, Tel Aviv

Colonel Abdul ‘Menem Khlaifat, J.A.F Head J.M.L.O

Beth-Eden Kite, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MASHAV)

Dr. Bahij Mansour, Israeli Embassy, Amman

**Second Planning Meeting  
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the Middle East Association For Managing Hearing Loss (MEHA)**

May 15, 2000

**AGENDA**

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING
2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
3. STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP
4. OPERATING COMMITTEE REPORT
5. THE KING HUSSEIN AUDIOLOGY CENTRE  
MEHA REGIONAL OFFICE
6. MEHA FINANCIAL REVIEW 1999-2000
7. RESOURCING FOR MEHA
8. MEHA 2000-2001 PROGRAM AND PROJECT PROPOSALS
9. STEERING COMMITTEE PRIORITIES
10. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

**Second Planning Meeting  
of the Steering Committee of  
the Middle East Association For Managing Hearing Loss (MEHA)**

May 15, 2000

**The Middle East Association for Managing Hearing Loss (MEHA)**

**TRAVEL POLICY**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistent and prudent treatment of travellers who are required to travel on MEHA business.

2. General

2.1 People travelling on MEHA business shall be afforded transportation and accommodation that are comfortable and of good quality. Allowances, rates and conditions of payment and reimbursement shall be sufficient to meet reasonable, legitimate expenses that are necessarily incurred as a result of the requirement to travel.

2.2 These provisions provide for the reimbursement of reasonable expenses necessarily incurred while travelling on MEHA business and do not constitute income or other compensation that would open the way for personal gain.

2.3 As a general rule, travellers are expected to undertake travel at the least cost when equivalent travel options are available.

2.4 All travel shall be pre-authorized. The entitlements of the traveller shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

2.5 It is the prerogative of MEHA to determine whether, when, where, by whom and by what means travel will be undertaken and to select the mode and class of transportation and the accommodation to be used, subject to the provisions of this policy.

2.6 Persons authorizing travel and persons authorized to travel should be aware that expenses resulting from misinterpretations or mistakes are not a basis for reimbursement. Uncertainties as to entitlements should be referred to higher authorities.

2.7 All travel, including the mode and class of transportation and type of accommodation, shall be authorized in advance in writing, signed by both the MEHA authorizing agent and the traveller, acknowledging acceptance of the terms of travel, which shall be in accordance with all instructions contained in this policy.

2.8 All changes from the pre-authorized travel arrangements, such as adjustments to itinerary, changes in mode of transportation, revisions to work schedules which affect, for example, alterations to overnight accommodation arrangements shall be justified in writing in support of expense claims submitted.

### 3. Responsibilities

3.1 The MEHA authorizing agent shall:

- a) be a regional Steering Committee member or his/her designate;
- b) ensure that this policy is available to individuals travelling on MEHA business;
- c) determine whether travel is necessary;
- d) ensure that the selection and acquisition of related arrangements (transportation, accommodation, advances, etc.) are consistent with the provisions of this policy;
- e) verify and approve travel expense claims before reimbursement.

3.2 The traveller shall:

- a) obtain prior authorization to travel;
- b) submit fully completed travel expense claims on the authorized form with necessary supporting documentation, including receipts and explanations as required;
- c) be responsible for the safeguarding of travel advances and funds provided;
- d) submit claims involving an advance within the first 10 working days of each following month whenever travel occurs; and
- e) submit claims that do not involve an advance as soon after completion of travel as possible but not later than 30 calendar days after the end of the fiscal year in which the travel occurred.

3.3 Claims received after dates indicated in 3.2 d) and 3.2 e) will only be reimbursed when properly substantiated by the traveller and when the authorizing agent is of the opinion that the delay was justified.

4. Travel advances

4.1 Travellers on MEHA business shall, to the extent feasible, be provided with a travel advance to cover travel expenses not paid directly by MEHA.

4.2 When an advance exceeds \$100, the traveller shall be reimbursed the cost of converting the advance into travellers' cheques and for costs necessarily incurred in cashing the cheques, based on receipts.

4.3 Where a traveller does not receive an advance and is thus obliged to use personal funds, charges for converting and cashing an appropriate amount of travellers' cheques will be reimbursed, based on receipts.

5. Insurance plans and compensation

5.1 MEHA shall have no responsibility in the event that a traveller becomes ill, is injured or dies while travelling on MEHA business.

5.2 Reimbursement may be made for additional insurance purchased by a traveller, up to US\$150.

6. Travel forms

6.1 The travel authority and advance form shall contain the following information:

- a) the travel number (if applicable);
- b) the purpose and duration of the trip;
- c) the locations to be visited;
- d) the dates and times of arrival and departure;
- e) any pre-paid transportation, meals or accommodation;
- f) the modes and classes of transportation authorized;
- g) vehicle rental authorization, including size;

- h) the kilometric rate authorized when a private vehicle is used;
- i) the amount of the advance authorized;
- j) the type of accommodation, place and daily rates;
- k) meal, incidental or comprehensive allowances to be authorized, or whether actual and reasonable expenses for meals and incidentals will be reimbursed;

## 7. Receipts

7.1 Receipts must be attached to the "Travel Expense Claim" form to support all travel expenditures, including transportation ticket stubs. Prepaid transportation, meals or accommodation shall also be noted.

7.2 Where the traveller certifies that the receipt was lost, accidentally destroyed or unobtainable, a personal declaration may replace the receipt.

## 8. Transportation

### 8.1 General

- a) The selection of the mode and class of commercial transportation shall be made by the employer on the basis of cost, convenience and practicality;
- b) Where feasible, the traveller shall be provided with the necessary prepaid tickets.

### 8.2 Air

- a) A traveller shall be reimbursed the actual and reasonable transportation costs based on receipts and use;
- b) The standard for air travel is economy class and this includes APEX, charters and other reduced fares. The lowest available airfares appropriate to particular itineraries shall be sought when making bookings. Discount and reduced fares shall be selected rather than full fare economy where these rates are available.
- c) Business/Executive Class air travel may be authorized when MEHA requires the traveller to travel on a continuous flight of nine or more hours with no stops between scheduled departure and scheduled arrival times, when requested by the traveller;

### 8.3 Taxi

- a) Taxis may be authorized when, in the authorizing agent's judgement, the use of such transportation is justifiable for MEHA business situations and other more economical alternatives such as local transit, airporter service or private vehicles are unavailable or impractical. Receipts are required.
- b) The "Travel Expense Claim" shall specify the point of origin, destination and cost of each taxi trip.

### 8.4 Rental vehicles

- a) Rental vehicles may be authorized where, in the opinion of the authorizing agent, this mode of travel is economical and practical.
- b) Compact-sized vehicles shall be rented. Mid-sized or full-sized vehicles may be authorized only when: the number of passengers to be carried; the bulk or weight of the goods to be transported; or an extenuating circumstance warrants the authorization of a larger vehicle.
- c) Payments in excess of those normally incurred, such as road, ferry, bridge, tunnel tolls and parking charges, shall be reimbursed based upon receipts.

### 8.5 Privately owned vehicles

- a) Privately owned vehicles may be authorized where, in the opinion of the authorizing agent, this mode of travel is economical and practical. All distances driven shall be accumulated and reimbursed in accordance with the appropriate kilometric rate. This rate is designed to offset operating costs, which consist of gasoline, oil, lubrication, tires, maintenance and repairs;
- b) To ensure that travellers are adequately protected, privately owned vehicles used on MEHA business shall, as a minimum, have basic insurance coverage. The cost of this insurance is provided for in the kilometric rates. Any additional insurance premium costs necessary to increase private vehicle insurance coverage to the basic level are not reimbursable;
- c) Additional premium costs for required public liability and property damage, collision and comprehensive coverage during the time period and route of the MEHA business travel shall be reimbursed, based on receipts.

## 8.6 Kilometric rates

The kilometric rates payable for the use of privately owned vehicles driven on authorized MEHA business are prescribed in the Appendix and are paid as outlined below:

- a) Travellers shall use only the most direct road routes and shall claim only for distances necessarily driven on MEHA business during the period claimed. That is, the distance from the authorized point of departure to the destination and return.
- b) When a traveller is authorized to proceed on MEHA business, travel between home and a carrier's terminal shall, taking into consideration the necessary luggage involved, be by the most economical and practical means, as pre-authorized by the employer. Use of private vehicles shall be reimbursed at the kilometric rate for the portions driven by the traveller, plus parking charges where it is cost-effective to leave a private vehicle at the public carrier's terminal during the period of absence.
- c) Travellers who wish to make their private vehicle available to the family during the period of travel may have someone in their family drive them to, or pick them up from, a public carrier's terminal. In such cases, all distances driven by the employee or family member shall be reimbursed. The amount claimable must be based on the most direct road route and each round trip cost claimed cannot exceed the one-way taxi fare.
- d) MEHA assumes no financial responsibility for privately owned vehicles other than paying the authorized kilometric rate and insurance premium, where required. MEHA is not responsible for reimbursing deductible amounts related to insurance coverage.
- e) No additional transportation costs are reimbursable to a traveller driving a privately owned vehicle in accordance with this subsection when carrying passengers.

**MEHA Travel Policy**

**ACCOMODATION AND TRAVEL**

Advances and reimbursement for MEHA travel will be calculated on the following rates and/or arrangements. Receipts must be provided to support all travel expenditures, including transportation ticket stubs.

	AIR TRAVEL	MEALS			KILOMETRIC RATE	HOTELS	INCIDENTALS
	Including: Return air tickets, airport tax, transport to and from airport, visas)	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner			Daily Maximum
Jordan	NO	Amman JD7 Other JD5.6	JD9	JD15		University standards	US\$10.00
Israel	NO	US\$8	US\$20	US\$27		University standards	US\$10.00
Palestinian Authority	NO	US\$8	US\$20	US\$27		University standards	US\$10.00
Travel within the Middle East	YES					University standards	US\$10.00
Travel between the Middle East and North America and Europe	YES					University standards	US\$10.00

