

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Joint Statement by President Barack Obama, President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada on the Global Influenza Outbreak

August 10, 2009

Building on the strong record of our trilateral cooperation during the spring of this year, we will remain vigilant and pledge to continue our close collaboration in addressing the H1N1 pandemic. We agree to work together to ensure that we have effective strategies, grounded in the best available science.

Our governments have worked closely together since the very beginning of this outbreak to protect the health of our citizens. During the onset of the H1N1 outbreak, we worked to implement science and evidence-based measures in our countries and on our borders. These measures were geared to provide an appropriate public health response. Movement across our shared borders is essential to the economic health of our countries. We recognize that highly restrictive measures such as general border closures would be unlikely to prevent the spread of this virus and could aggravate the economic and social consequences of an influenza pandemic.

We continue to study the severity and progression of the virus both here and in other parts of the world to help inform future public health decisions, including the use of vaccine, antiviral, and non-pharmaceutical interventions. Through regular communications; exchange of scientific knowledge, expert personnel, and clinical data; and shared access to laboratory facilities, we have been working to promote the health of the people of our three nations.

In anticipation of a possible fall wave of flu due to the 2009 H1N1 virus, we will look to enhance our exchange of information, ensure common understanding on the effectiveness of public health measures, and share expertise through technical assistance and capacity building. We will continue to do everything we can to ensure that our people have timely and accurate information, and that our citizens are as prepared as they can be. In this regard, we will focus our attention on mitigating the effects of the outbreak in our communities. We encourage all families in North America to learn more about the simple steps they can take to prevent the spread of the flu, including frequent hand washing with soap and water, coughing into your sleeve, and staying home when sick to help prevent illness and the spread of the virus to others.

We know that cooperation and communication between nations, governments, citizens, and domestic and international organizations are the most effective ways to ensure that we are all protected. The strong collaboration between our countries allowed us to have a more secure North America region. We are proud that our countries have collaborated so effectively to this point, and we are firmly committed to continuing to work together in the months ahead. We will continue to work collaboratively with the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization and support their leadership in facilitating international and regional collaboration in addressing this global issue.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

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