The Director General

Our Ref.: COM/PP25092018

Paris, 25 September 2018

World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Rinderpest Challenge

Dear OIE Delegate,

In the past, rinderpest caused the deaths of millions of animals all over the world, with terrible consequences on food security and livelihoods, particularly in developing countries, where the disease was responsible for famines and devastating economic losses. Thanks to decades of concerted efforts at the global level, rinderpest was officially declared eradicated from the planet by the OIE and FAO in 2011, and therefore it is the first and only animal disease to have been completely eradicated, and only the second disease in history, after smallpox. However, there is still a risk of reoccurrence. In order to help safeguard our world so that it remains free of rinderpest, by ensuring that the memory of this disease stays alive and particularly that key players in animal health are fully aware of the role that they still have to play in the post eradication era, the OIE has created the Rinderpest “Never Turn Back” communication campaign.

The campaign includes a set of tools that can be consulted and downloaded at http://rinderpestvigilance.com, as well as a serious game developed specifically for veterinary students, laboratory practitioners and the veterinary community.

In this context, from 4th October to 1st November 2018, the OIE will launch the OIE Rinderpest Challenge among veterinary students, laboratory practitioners and any other person interested in maintaining the memory of the rinderpest virus alive. It is a four-week challenge during which we expect, as much as possible, for veterinary students to play and learn how to detect and eliminate possible rinderpest outbreaks as well as differentiate the virus from other animal diseases.

From September to November, the OIE will be disseminating the game and inviting the veterinary community to play the OIE Rinderpest Challenge. The game can be downloaded onto any Android or iPhone mobile and can be accessed through any computer with an internet connection at www.rinderpestvigilance.com. You will be receiving all the necessary information regarding the OIE Rinderpest Challenge by email.

I would like to request for your support in disseminating and implementing the OIE Rinderpest Challenge among the Veterinary Service of your country in order to reach as many Veterinary Schools, veterinary students and veterinary practitioners as possible.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for your support.

Sincerely,

Dr Monique Eloit