Conference Resolution
Resolution of the 20th Annual Conference and Continuing Professional Development and the 50th Anniversary and Golden Jubilee of the Ethiopian Medical Laboratory Association (EMLA)
‘Laboratory Medicine: The Gate to Better Health’

Preamble
Reviewing that the core functions of medical/clinical/public health laboratory discipline is the provision of results of measurements and observations, together with interpretation and informed clinical advices relevant to the maintenance of health, the cause of disease, the diagnosis of disease, predicting and monitoring the response to therapy, and follow up investigations;

Recognizing the nature of the health laboratory service problems that stems from inappropriate infrastructure, un-updated professionals skill, inappropriate management structure, delayed and complicated procurement and supply chain of in-vitro diagnostic medical devices, and rudimentary regulatory practices;

Working closely with and soliciting the support of relevant government organs and stakeholders such as the Federal Ministry of Health of Ethiopia and its subsidiary agencies, the Ethiopian Medical Association (EMA), United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization-Ethiopia, JHPIEGO-Ethiopia, CAP-Ethiopia and the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCCLM) to have a compelling voice to improve clinical laboratory sciences education, services and research;

Conducting a successful panel discussion on the main theme of the conference ‘Laboratory Medicine: The Gate to Better Health’ on the 9th of May 2015 in Ghion Hotel, Addis Ababa as its main part of the 20th annual conference and continuing professional development, and the 50th anniversary and golden jubilee;

The Ethiopian Medical Laboratory Association (EMLA), after listening to and deliberating upon study findings and experiences of renowned experts in the area presented to its annual Conference has noted that:

- Laboratory medicine is undergoing rapid changes due to technological advancement. This has led to an appreciation of the need for a common approach to quality standards and clinical applications to meet expectations of patients, clinicians, policy makers and other health stakeholders.

- Globalization will continue to impact on the organization and delivery of clinical laboratory services, from technological advances and revolution in Epigenetics, Genomics, Proteomics, Metabolomics and Nanotechnology.
- Economies of scale, the advent of patient choice and personalized medicine will also demand an integrated approach of diagnostics to add value to improve patient outcomes.

- Healthcare budgets are under pressure across the world as we struggle to cope with population growth, infectious diseases, medical advances and a rapidly rising workload. Laboratory Medicine shall show itself to be flexible by improving efficiency, sharing technology and adopting common practices.

- Advances in technology have enabled increasing amounts of clinical laboratory medicine services to be delivered outside medical laboratories, closer to the patient. Point of care testing now occurs in hospital wards, health centers, clinics and in the home.

- Advances in Laboratory Medicine have occurred as a result of improved knowledge and understanding of the pure sciences, related medical sciences and technology. As a result modern medical laboratories incorporate highly sophisticated equipment and methodologies. High throughput analytical platforms capable of performing tens of thousands of tests per day sit alongside state of the art mass spectrometers, cell counters and micro-array systems. Consequently, modern medical laboratories require highly trained and skilled medical laboratory technologists, medical laboratory specialists and scientists including specialists in analysis, clinical application, result interpretation and consultation.

- The diversification of Laboratory Medicine has created a natural and positive partnership between Laboratory Medicine specialists in clinical laboratories and in the in-vitro diagnostics industry. Typically original science in research laboratories leads companies to develop new diagnostic products that are translated into service and validated in medical laboratories with synergy.

- In the modern era of Laboratory Medicine results are not enough. The quality of results has to be assured. And quality assurance is an all embracing agenda that includes internal quality control, external quality assessment, quality management system, laboratory accreditation, method standardization to the highest level of traceability, and harmonization of testing algorithms, properties and units.

- Inline of the above evidences and initiated by the request forwarded in the opening address of the Director General, Office of the Ministers Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to convey the outcome of the deliberations of the Conference to his Ministry, it is hereby resolved as follows:
Resolution

1. To ensure sustainable quality public health laboratory services, pertinent laboratory medicine agendas need to be appropriately reflected with policy direction and strategies in the HSTP, visioning Ethiopia 2035 and health policy document which are under development and revision.

2. Emphasis to be given to properly position medical laboratory by establishing, developing, strengthening and networking the national health laboratory system to assume to be responsive to preventive, participatory, predictive and personalized medicine.

3. Focus to be given to evaluate new in-vitro diagnostic medical devices and technologies for public health laboratory services to enhance validation and their subsequent introduction into the national laboratory system ultimately to ensure accessibility, affordability, efficiency, safety and public protection.

4. Focused strategies to be in place to establish, develop and improve the procurement, supply chain management (selection, procurement, distribution and inventory control), and distribution of in-vitro diagnostic medical devices and technologies to provide maximum best possible medical laboratory services in the country.

5. Increase awareness of laboratories in the national health system and equip with functioning analyzers to ensure operations at acceptable quality standards so as to produce accurate laboratory results for maximum patient care.


7. Harmonize and standardize criteria for rationalized selection, procurement, maintenance and disposal of equipment and supplies for the national public health laboratory system.

8. Ensure that laboratory testing services are accessible to all Ethiopians by building testing capacity in a rationalized and tiered laboratory network system.

9. Develop referral linkage system among the tiers of the laboratory network.

10. Establish a national laboratory quality assurance system and in-house production of proficiency tests with proper laboratory management, training, documentation, monitoring and evaluation.

11. Ensure that health laboratories are encouraged to participate in operational health research to generate evidence based data, to strengthen local production of in-vitro diagnostics and to improve laboratory performance, patient management, disease control, and industry linkage.

12. Enforce implementation of national laboratory standard at national, regional and facility level to improve and ensure adherence to high quality standards and to enable to discharge basic and specialized service package.
The General Assembly of EMLA finally recommended that this resolution be submitted to the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) and its subsidiary agencies (FMHACA, PFSA, EPHI), other relevant organs including the House of Peoples’ Representatives, Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) and development partners (WHO, CDC, ICAP-E and JHPIEGO-E) for their appropriate actions, follow ups and support.

The Conference further entrusted the Executive Board and the secretariat of EMLA with the responsibility of collaborating with the government, development partners and all concerned bodies in the realization of this resolution.

EMLA’s 20th Annual Conference and Continuing Professional Development
50th Anniversary and Golden Jubilee
Ghion Hotel, Addis Ababa
10 May 22015

Epilogue

Through leadership and innovation in science and technology, EMLA will strive to enhance the scientific level and the quality of diagnosis and therapy for patients in the country. EMLA will build on the professionalism of its members to provide quality services to patients. EMLA will aim to communicate effectively with its members, other healthcare providers and the public to ensure knowledge of our excellent scientific and educational achievements. EMLA always endeavor to maintain scientific standards, publications, education and communications. To be more visible, EMLA will communicate effectively through a variety of electronic media. EMLA will continue to hold outstanding congresses and conferences, focused in-service training, continuous professional development and mentorship programs to bring its efforts to the national community.