

Commission :Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS)

Question : Bioéthique, transhumanisme, vaccinations, vers un New Deal de la santé mondiale ?

Author: Niger

Bioethics, transhumanism and vaccinations are themes that create an ongoing debate today. The Nigerien delegation is more engaged in health issues than ever and seeks to renew itself through the adoption of new technologies and assistance from other countries. We are striving toward a New Deal for Global Health.

Located in the heart of the Sahel, the Republic of Niger is a country rich in natural resources, including uranium, oil, iron, coal, and gold. Niger became a member of the United Nations shortly after its independence on September 20, 1960. Since July 26, 2023, our territory has been governed by the National Council for the Safeguarding of the Homeland (CNSP). Currently, our nation faces a critical situation regarding national security, marked by recent terrorist activities at the Mali border, rising banditry, and the poor management of the previous administration, all of which have plunged us into security instability.

Despite these challenges, Niger wants to improve, and it is currently doing its best to create a better health system and ensure its people prosperity. The World Health Organization (WHO) has been present in Niger since 1960, with representation in eight different regions, including a main office in Niamey, the capital, and sub-offices in each region. Niger has made significant progress in health, largely due to WHO support, which has initiated diverse plans to upgrade the health system. Improvements can be seen in various diseases that have historically threatened the population. For instance, maternal mortality decreased by 207 deaths per 100,000 births between 2006 and 2020 along with other remarkable improvements.

Furthermore, Niger has implemented a Health Development Plan for 2017-2021 focused on improving health coverage, quality (including better hospitals), and the utilization of services, as well as promoting preventive and healthy habits. With the support of WHO, Niger is glad to install a New Deal for Global Health and restructure its expenses in health services to achieve it. In fact, in response to the diseases that threatened its populations, the country transformed 260 tuberculosis screening and treatment centers into one-stop services for managing cases of TB/HIV co-infection and HIV infection. As a result of these efforts, the mortality rate from tuberculosis and HIV co-infection significantly decreased from 21% to 14% between 2020 and 2022. In addition, we are convinced that following a strict vaccination policy is necessary to protect our population's health. That is why Niger has implemented national vaccination campaigns targeting diseases like measles, polio, and hepatitis B, reaching more children across the country.

Niger is committed to ongoing progress. however, it will never succeed alone. That is why, the Nigerian delegation believes international cooperation is crucial. The Nigerien government, in collaboration with WHO and other health organizations, has already developed a new Cooperation Strategy with the country (SCP) for the period 2023-2027. This strategy aims to reinforce the health system in the context of universal health coverage while enhancing health by considering social and environmental determinants, including climate change. Niger is not stuck in the past; it is actively pursuing progress.

We are fully aware that transhumanism and bioethics raise significant questions about the future of humanity. Genetic modifications, such as the development of mRNA vaccines, and advancements in health technology open new doors and offer a wide range of opportunities that we should capitalize on. However, these questions must be addressed through an ethical analysis, known as bioethics. Niger is committed to ensuring that the implementation of advanced technologies

does not leave behind countries that cannot afford or manage such innovations. We advocate for collaboration between nations to ensure that everyone can achieve well-being. The rapid development of emerging countries is in everyone's interest, as it helps secure a sustainable future for all.

In other words, even though Niger is not the wealthiest country, it is fully committed to the well-being of its population. The government is open to utilizing new technologies to achieve its goals. The Nigerien delegation believes that with the support of more developed countries, innovative projects can emerge. Niger is eager to welcome any pharmaceutical or research industry interested in conducting investigations on its soil, believing that both parties can benefit from this collaboration. Of course, always complying with the laws and ethical frameworks that delimit human based research.