

***The International Pharmacopoeia, First Edition***

The Third World Health Assembly, held in May 1950, formally approved the publication of the *Pharmacopoea Internationalis* and recommended, in accordance with Article 23 of the WHO Constitution, "the eventual inclusion of its provisions by the authorities responsible for the pharmacopoeias". It was thus recommended that the *Pharmacopoea Internationalis* was not intended to be a legal pharmacopoeia in any country unless adopted by the pharmacopoeial authority of that country. From that moment WHO constituted the Permanent International Pharmacopoeia Secretariat.

The First Edition, published with the aim of creating a worldwide, unified pharmacopoeia, relied on collaboration with national pharmacopoeia commissions for its preparation. It was published in two volumes (1951 and 1955) and a supplement (1959) in English, French and Spanish, and was also translated into German and Japanese. Altogether, it included 344 monographs on drug substances, 183 monographs on dosage forms (capsules, injections, tablets and tinctures) and 84 tests, methods and general requirements.

A large number of national pharmacopoeias and official lists were examined and assistance was also obtained from the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) to determine the selection of substances and products to be described in the pharmacopoeia. Latin was chosen for the monograph titles because of its distinction as an international language. Experts collaborated with the WHO Expert Committee on Biological Standardization with regard to biological products and with those working in specific divisions, e.g. malaria, maternal and child health, mental health and venereal diseases, to help collate the required information.