

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 26, 1987

Dear Dr. Mahler:

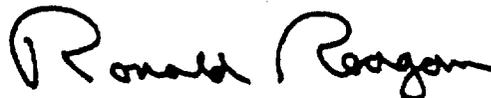
On behalf of the United States Government, I am proud to take this occasion to mark the tenth anniversary of the World Health Organization's successful program to eradicate smallpox, and to congratulate you on your leadership in that effort.

Smallpox was once considered to be "too insidious to eradicate." Its elimination is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished by mankind when nations work together toward a common goal. I am particularly proud of the role the United States played in this fight in partnership with the World Health Organization and other nations. The success of the eradication campaign serves to remind us all that international cooperation is invaluable for battling and solving common problems, especially those that appear insurmountable.

Thomas Jefferson said, "Future generations will know only by history alone that the loathsome smallpox has existed." The truth of his prediction strengthens our conviction today, as we confront the new global pandemic of AIDS, that this disease too will be relegated to the dustheap of history.

Dr. Mahler, please accept my heartfelt gratitude for the World Health Organization's remarkable achievement, which has saved countless lives from the ravages of this dreadful disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald Reagan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

Halfdan T. Mahler, M.D.  
Director-General  
World Health Organization  
1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland