



**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA**

**ORIGINAL: ENGLISH**

Sixty-fourth session

Cotonou, Republic of Benin, 3–7 November 2014

Provisional agenda item 8

**NOMINATION OF THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

**Note by the Legal Counsel**

**CONTENTS**

	<b>Paragraphs</b>
BACKGROUND .....	1–4
THE PROCEDURE FOLLOWED BEFORE THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE .....	5
THE PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATION DURING THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE .....	6
INTERVIEWING THE CANDIDATES .....	7–11
VOTING TO NOMINATE A CANDIDATE .....	12–14

**ANNEXES**

	<b>Page</b>
1. Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee .....	4
2. Criteria for the Nomination of Regional Director .....	6

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The purpose of this document is to provide the background information and a summary of the Regional Committee's role in the nomination of the Regional Director for Africa.

2. Article 52 of the WHO Constitution provides that "the head of the regional office shall be the Regional Director appointed by the Board in agreement with the regional committee". Article 52 has been implemented in WHO in the following manner. The Regional Committee for each region has adopted rules of procedure governing how it nominates a candidate to the post of Regional Director. In the case of the African Region, this procedure is set forth in Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee (attached herewith as Annex 1). The Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board set out how the Board then decides on the appointment of a person thus nominated by a Regional Committee. The Board's Rules of Procedure provide that the term of office of a person appointed as Regional Director shall be five years, renewable once only.

3. The Regional Committee for Africa revised the process for the nomination of the Regional Director at its Fifty-third session in 2003 while, at the same time, reaffirming the applicability of the criteria for nomination to the post of Regional Director it had initially adopted at its Forty-eighth session in 1998 (see Annex 2). The procedure adopted at the Fifty-third session was used by the Committee at its Fifty-fourth session in 2004 to nominate the current Regional Director. The Regional Committee followed the approach used for the nomination of the Director-General by the Executive Board since 1998, by providing for a shortlisting process in case of more than five candidatures as well as for interviewing each candidate. The Regional Committee further amended Rule 52 with regard to the nomination process at its Sixty-third session in 2013.

4. It should be added, by way of background, that the Sixty-fifth Health Assembly in 2012 requested the Regional Committees to harmonize certain elements of their procedures and to align them to those adopted by the Executive Board and Health Assembly. With regard to the nomination of the Regional Director, the Health Assembly requested that, in line with principles of fairness, accountability and transparency, the Regional Committee establish criteria for the selection of candidates and a process for assessment of all candidates' qualifications. All Regional Committees have aligned their respective nomination processes accordingly. The Regional Committee for Africa actually preceded the WHO reform by revising the nomination process at its Fifty-third session as mentioned above.

## **THE PROCEDURE FOLLOWED BEFORE THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

5. On 28 February 2014, the Director-General informed each Member State of the Region that each Member State could propose the name of one suitably qualified and experienced citizen of that State with a medical background for the post of Regional Director up until the close of business on 6 June 2014. In addition, Member States were informed that the proposal of a candidate must be accompanied, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Rule 52, by a curriculum vitae and other supporting information of not more than 2000 words, including in electronic format. On 19 June 2014, the Director-General communicated to Member States of the Region the names of the five candidates that she had received by 6 June together with the curriculum vitae and other supporting material submitted by Member States.

## **THE PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATION DURING THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

6. The procedure during the Regional Committee consists of three stages:

- (i) establishing the short list in case of more than five candidates;
- (ii) interviewing the candidates;
- (iii) voting to nominate a candidate.

Since only five candidatures were received by the Director-General, the Regional Committee will not have to establish a short list in accordance with paragraph 6 of Rule 52. The two stages of the nomination process that the Committee will have to undertake are, therefore, the following:

### **INTERVIEWING THE CANDIDATES**

7. The candidates shall be interviewed by the Committee in a private meeting, open only to Member States of the Region as well as essential Secretariat staff designated by the Director-General. Subject to final confirmation by the Regional Committee, it is assumed that the interview will take place on Tuesday 2 September. Experience with the conduct of interviews at the Executive Board and Regional Committees shows that interviewing five candidates will take most of the day.

8. Paragraph 7 of Rule 52 provides that the interview shall consist of a presentation by each candidate in addition to answers to questions from Members of the Committee. The Committee shall determine, as appropriate, the modalities for the interview. Rule 52 does not specify the topic of the presentation; it would appear therefore most appropriate that the topic should be left for each candidate to decide.

9. As for the structure of the interview, it is assumed that the Regional Committee will wish to follow the approach it adopted at its Fifty-fourth session, which is also that used since 1998 by the Executive Board for the nomination of the Director-General as well as by other Regional Committees as a consequence of the current reform process. That approach was generally felt to be effective in assessing the qualifications and skills of the candidates as well as giving a fair and equal treatment to each candidate.

10. In this connection, the Regional Committee should limit each interview to 60 minutes, divided equally between an oral presentation by the candidate for a maximum of 30 minutes and the question-and-answer period, equally for a maximum of 30 minutes. The times are strictly adhered to. Both the presentation period and the question-and-answer period are conducted without the use of any visual aid (e.g. PowerPoint presentations) or the distribution of any written material in the meeting room. Both periods are measured by the Secretariat through the use of "traffic lights" so that both the candidates as well as the Regional Committee know when the time allotted is going to expire.

11. The question-and-answer section was conducted as follows by the Regional Committee at its Fifty-fourth session as well as by the Executive Board and other Regional Committees, and it is assumed that the Committee will want to follow the same procedure:

- (i) Before the beginning of each presentation, the Secretariat will distribute to each representative a paper on which the representative may write one question.
- (ii) The papers are collected by the Secretariat at the end of the presentation and handed over to the Chairperson, who draws each question randomly and poses it to the candidate.

- (iii) The candidate has up to three minutes to respond to each question.
- (iv) Should there be insufficient questions to fill the allotted time, the candidate could make such additional statements as desired until the end of the 60-minute period set for the interview.

Additional details will be described in a proposal by the Chairman of the Regional Committee (formulated with the guidance of the WHO Legal Counsel), emphasis being placed on the need for fairness and equality of treatment of all candidates.

## **VOTING TO NOMINATE A CANDIDATE**

12. The last stage involves voting to nominate the candidate whose name is to be submitted to the Executive Board for appointment. The procedure for this stage is set out in paragraph 8 of Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure, and has largely remained unchanged.

13. In summary, each representative places the name of one candidate on his or her ballot paper. If no candidate receives a majority of votes from the representatives present and voting,<sup>1</sup> the candidate receiving the least number of votes is eliminated at each ballot until a candidate receives the required majority. Rule 52 provides a specific procedure to deal with persistent tie votes between two sole remaining candidates. In practice, since the process of interviewing the five candidates is expected to take up virtually the entire day of Tuesday, the voting to nominate a candidate will normally need to take place in the morning of Wednesday 3 September 2014.

14. As far as the duration of the appointment of a new Regional Director is concerned, since Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board provides that the appointment of a Regional Director shall be for five years, the Regional Committee does not need to make any recommendation in this regard.

---

<sup>1</sup> Rule 43 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee provides that decisions of the Committee shall be made by a majority of the Members present and voting which, in accordance with Rule 42, means that abstentions are not counted in calculating the required majority. Consequently, if all 47 Members of the Committee cast a valid ballot and none abstains, the required majority is 24. Should five Members abstain, for example, the Members present and voting would be 42 and the required majority would be 22.

**ANNEX 1: RULE 52 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

**Rule 52**

1. Not less than six months before the date fixed for the opening of a session of the Committee at which the Regional Director is to be nominated, the Director-General shall inform each Member State that he/she will receive proposals for the names of persons for nomination by the Committee for the post of Regional Director.
2. Any Member State may propose for the post of Regional Director the names of one suitably qualified and experienced citizen of that State with a medical background, by submitting with the proposal a curriculum vitae and other supporting information of not more than 2000 words (statement of vision, priorities and strategies). Such proposals shall be sent to the Director-General, including in electronic format, so as to reach him/her at the Headquarters of the Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, not less than twelve weeks before the date fixed for the opening of the session.
3. If the incumbent Regional Director is available and eligible for reappointment in accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board, the Director-General shall inform each Member accordingly at the time when he/she invites proposals for names of nominees for the post of Regional Director. The name of the Regional Director in office thus available shall automatically be submitted to the Committee and shall not require a proposal from any Member.
4. The Director-General shall, not less than ten weeks before the date fixed for the opening of the session of the Committee, cause copies of all proposals for nomination for the post of Regional Director (with the curriculum vitae of each person and other supporting information) received by him/her within the period specified to be sent to each Member under confidential cover.
5. If no proposals have been received by the Director-General in time for transmission to Member States in accordance with this Rule, Member States shall be informed accordingly not less than ten weeks before the opening of the session of the Committee. The Committee shall itself establish a list of candidates composed of the names proposed in secret by the representatives present and voting.
6. If the Director-General receives more than five candidatures within the period specified in paragraph 2, the Committee shall draw a short list of five candidates at the commencement of its session. For this purpose, the Committee shall hold a secret ballot, and the five candidates obtaining the highest number of votes shall make up the short list. In the event of a tie between two or more persons such that there are more than five persons identified for inclusion on the short list, there shall be additional ballots between those persons receiving the tie votes, with those receiving the highest number of votes filling the remaining place or places on the shortlist.
7. The persons referred to in paragraph 2 or 3 or— in the case of paragraph 6 being applicable— those persons on the shortlist, shall be interviewed by the Committee in a private meeting. The interview shall consist of a presentation by each candidate in addition to answers to questions from Members of the Committee. The Committee shall determine, as appropriate, the modalities for the interviews.

8. The nomination of the Regional Director shall take place in a private meeting of the Committee. The Committee shall make a selection by secret ballot from among the persons referred to in paragraphs 2 or 3 or—in the case of paragraph 6 being applicable—those persons on the shortlist, in the following manner:
  - (a) Each representative entitled to vote shall write on the ballot paper the name of a single candidate.
  - (b) The candidate who obtains at a ballot the majority required shall be declared nominated.
  - (c) At a ballot when no candidate obtains the majority required, the candidate who obtains the least number of votes shall be eliminated.
  - (d) When the number of candidates is reduced to two, there shall be as many ballots as are necessary to secure the majority for either candidate.
  - (e) In the event of a tie between the two remaining candidates after three such ballots, the established procedure shall be recommenced on the basis of the original list of candidates.
9. The name of the person so nominated shall be submitted to the Executive Board.

## **ANNEX 2: CRITERIA FOR THE NOMINATION OF REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

### **Qualifications**

The following constitute the set of criteria that should be met by the candidate nominated to the post of Regional Director.

#### ***Good understanding of and commitment to the WHO mission***

The candidate must show a clear understanding of WHO mission, roles, functions, policies and strategies. There must be demonstrated evidence of the candidate's personal involvement or a plan to further that commitment.

#### ***Proven leadership qualities***

The candidate must be visionary, dynamic and results-oriented. It is very important that the candidate possess the ability to communicate both orally and in writing, in a clear, effective and inspiring way to varying target groups, including the mass media, political leaders, other leaders in the public health field, health personnel, a wide range of academic and professional groups within and outside the health sector as well as WHO staff. He or she should have personal integrity and a great capacity to withstand pressures from both official and private sources on issues that could jeopardize the Organization's interests.

#### ***Proven managerial ability***

The candidate should be able to manage a complex organization in the health field. This requires a highly analytical mind and the ability to set clear goals and objectives, design appropriate programmes for the optimal use of the Organization's overall resources, and develop an appropriate process for the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the Organization in the Region. It is important that the candidate have skills both in fostering teamwork with appropriate delegation of responsibility and in creating a conducive work environment for staff at regional and country office levels. Given the need to interact with and actively support the efforts of headquarters and other regions within the context of the oneness of the Organization, the candidate's ability to work effectively with leaders, at both national and international levels, in the health and related sectors is an important requirement.

#### ***Professional and technical qualifications***

The candidate should be professionally qualified in the health field and have a sound knowledge of public health, including its epidemiological basis.

#### ***Sensitivity to cultural, social, political and other differences***

The candidate should have a broad knowledge of and be sensitive to the varying cultural, social, political and linguistic differences of the Region. For this reason, he or she should, among other things, be fluent in at least one of the three working languages of the Region and have a working knowledge of at least one of the other languages. Reasonable working experience in the Region, particularly in the work of WHO, would be an asset.

#### ***Medical fitness***

The candidate should be sufficiently healthy to carry out the duties of the post.