



REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

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## METHOD OF WORK AND DURATION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

### Report of the Regional Director

#### Executive Summary

This document is designed to facilitate the work of the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Executive Board and the World Health Assembly concerning the method of work and duration of the Health Assembly. The Regional Committee is hereby invited to examine the document and advise on the draft procedural decisions. Decisions taken will be transmitted to the Director-General.

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## **FIFTY-SEVENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

1. The Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly lasted six (6) days.

### **Outcome of the Health Assembly**

2. The agenda of the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly mainly covered the global strategy on diet, physical activity and health; reproductive health; treatment and care within a coordinated and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS; road safety; Buruli ulcer; eradication of dracunculiasis; and mental health.

3. Dr Jong-wook Lee, WHO Director-General, in his opening address, said that there were encouraging signs of progress towards China's inclusion in its delegation of Taiwanese doctors to participate in WHO technical deliberations. He interrupted his address to allow Ms Anastasia Kamylyk of Belarus to tell her story as a person living with HIV/AIDS. Dr Lee then went on to give the Health Assembly some instructive figures on the world health situation.

4. The Director-General stressed the need to decentralize in order to improve the effectiveness of results-based budgeting and the need for greater transparency and collaboration. He called on the Health Assembly to give special attention to the health of women and children which will be the theme of World Health Day 2005.

5. The Health Assembly adopted 19 resolutions on important issues, including:

- (a) *Eradication of dracunculiasis.* The endemic countries made a commitment, in the presence of President Jimmy Carter, to make every effort to eradicate the disease by 2009.
- (b) *Reproductive health: Draft strategy to accelerate progress towards the attainment of international development goals and targets.* The Health Assembly underscored the need to give special attention to maternal and newborn health in anticipation of the production by WHO in 2005 of the first reproductive and sexual health report as part of WHO's contribution to the UN Secretary-General's report to the UN General Assembly on progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- (c) *International migration of health personnel: A challenge for health systems in developing countries.* The Health Assembly, among other things, requested the Director-General to mobilize all related WHO programme areas, in collaboration with Member States, to develop human resources and improve the support provided to developing countries in the area of health, by creating appropriate mechanisms.

### **Ministerial Round Tables**

6. Four ministerial round tables were organized concurrently, this year, on HIV/AIDS which is the most serious public health crisis of modern times. The round tables addressed four distinct but interdependent subjects:

- (a) access to HIV care and treatment in countries;

- (b) strengthening the capacity of health services to increase access to HIV/AIDS treatment in countries;
- (c) strategies for integrating prevention and treatment programmes in countries;
- (d) mobilizing partners and financial resources to enhance access to HIV/AIDS treatment in countries.

7. A total of 132 ministers and heads of delegation took part in the round tables. This high participation demonstrates the interest in HIV/AIDS worldwide.

#### **METHOD OF WORK AND DURATION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

8. It was proposed to convene the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly on Monday, 16 May 2005 at the *Palais des Nations*, Geneva, and to close it no later than Tuesday, 25 May 2005.

9. In line with Resolution WHA52.21 on the reform of the World Health Assembly by which the Director-General is requested to make appropriate arrangements for a shortened plenary meeting, delegates at the Health Assembly will be:

- (a) requested to limit, to five minutes, their statements in such debates;
- (b) encouraged to make group or regional statements;
- (c) invited to submit written statements of not more than 600 words for inclusion in the verbatim records of the plenary meeting in lieu of taking the floor.

10. Delegates wishing to have their names placed on the list of speakers for the general discussion should notify the WHO Governing Bodies Department in advance, sending their notification to fax number 41 22 791 41 73.

11. Copies of statements to be made during the general discussion should be submitted to the Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of the Health Assembly by the morning of 17 May 2005.

12. The theme for World Health Day 2005 will be "Health of Women and Children".

#### **Credentials**

13. The credentials of delegates, alternates and advisers should be delivered to the Secretariat (Governing Bodies Department) **by 1st May 2005**. Credentials shall be issued by the Head of State, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health, or any other appropriate authority. Member States shall be represented at the Assembly by not more than three (3) delegates. Alternates and advisers may accompany delegates. Only original documents are examined and considered for formal credentials by the Committee on Credentials. Faxes and e-mails are not considered as formal credentials but may be sent to the Governing Bodies Department (fax: + 41 22 791 41 73; e-mail: credentials@who.int) for advance information prior to delivery of the original document. Credentials should include

the following information for each participant: LAST NAME (in capital letters), first name, title, function, institution, city, gender (unless indicated in title).

### **Reimbursement of travel expenses**

14. Resolution WHA 50.1 provides that only Member States that are classified as least developed countries by the United Nations shall be reimbursed for the actual travel expenses of one delegate each and, in accordance with WHO policy, only for travel by the most direct route.

### **Vice-President of the World Health Assembly**

15. The African Region will designate a candidate for the post of Vice-President of the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly. In accordance with Decision 5(3) of the thirty-third session of the Regional Committee, the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Regional Committee will be proposed to hold the office of Vice-President of the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly.

## **MEMBER STATES ENTITLED TO DESIGNATE PERSONS TO SERVE ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

### **The Executive Board**

16. The Executive Board consists of 32 persons designated by as many Member States. The African Region has seven (7) members on the Board. The terms of office of each Member is three (3) years, that is, each member will serve on six (6) Board meetings. New members are elected during the World Health Assembly and the term of office starts at the EB session which immediately follows that Health Assembly and ends after the closing of the Health Assembly during which the Member is replaced.

### **Current practice of designating persons to serve on the Executive Board**

17. The practice of designating persons to serve on the Executive Board has, until now, been according to the English alphabetical order which is limiting in that not all subregional blocs are represented at all times. To remedy this, a working group was set up at the fifty-third session of the Regional Committee for Africa to look into different possibilities of establishing a more equitable geographical representation on the Board.

### **Proposed arrangements for designating persons to serve on the Executive Board**

18. The Informal Meeting of the Regional Committee held in May 2004 during the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly in Geneva considered the recommendations of the subcommittee on revision of the method used by the Regional Committee to determine the nomination of Member States to serve on the Executive Board and decided that the following arrangement should be adhered to when putting forward each year the names of Member States from the African Region for election by the Health Assembly.

- (a) For the purpose of ensuring a geographical balance of Member States from the African Region serving on the Board, the Regional Membership should be

divided into three subregions: Subregion I, Subregion II and Subregion III, corresponding to the African Region's geographical grouping;

- (b) Each subregion should be allocated two seats out of the seven to which the Region is entitled, with the additional seat rotating between the subregions. The subregion to benefit first from the floating seat shall be decided by consensus, failing which it shall be decided by drawing lots. Thereafter, the seat would rotate in numerical order, that is, for example, from Region II to III to I and back to II etc;
- (c) Member States currently represented on the Board would continue their term of membership, with empty seats arising within each subregion being filled in accordance with the new arrangements described herein commencing for the terms of Members on the Board starting as of May 2005 (as illustrated in the report of the subcommittee, Annex III).

### **Member States entitled to designate persons to serve on the Executive Board from May 2005**

19. Kenya and Lesotho designated persons to serve on the Executive Board with effect from the one-hundred-and-fourteenth session held immediately after the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly, joining Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau from the African Region.

20. The term of office of Gabon, Gambia, Ghana and Guinea will end with the closing of the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly. **In accordance with the new arrangements adopted in May 2004 at the Informal Meeting of the Regional Committee**, these countries will be replaced by Liberia (Subregion I), Rwanda (Subregion II) and Madagascar (Subregion III). It is proposed that the seventh seat (the floating seat) be allocated to Namibia from Subregion III since that country has never had an opportunity to serve on the Executive Board.

21. These countries (Liberia, Rwanda, Madagascar and Namibia) will attend the one-hundred-and-sixteenth session of the Executive Board in May 2005 and should confirm their availability at least six (6) weeks before the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly.

22. The Fifty-first World Health Assembly decided, by Resolution WHA51.26, that the persons designated to serve on the Board should be government representatives technically qualified in the field of health.

### **MAIN COMMITTEES OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

23. The Thirty-first World Health Assembly, by its Resolution WHA31.1, decided that:

- (a) the terms of reference of Committee A shall be:
  - (i) to deal primarily with programme and budget matters;
  - (ii) to review the proposed programme budget and the Executive Board's report thereon;
  - (iii) to recommend the budget level and the appropriation resolution;

- (iv) to consider the tentative budgetary projections for the following biennium and study such other items as shall be referred to it by the World Health Assembly (Rule 34);
- (b) the terms of reference of Committee B shall be:
  - (i) to deal primarily with administrative, financial and legal matters;
  - (ii) to review WHO's financial position, including the Financial Report and the Report of the External Auditors; the status of contributions and advances to the Working Capital Fund; the status of any funds that have a bearing on WHO's financial position; and consideration of the amount of available casual income to be used to help finance the budget;
  - (iii) to recommend the scale of assessment;
  - (iv) to study such other items as shall be referred to it by the World Health Assembly.

24. The Chairmen of these Main Committees shall be elected by the World Health Assembly after consideration of the Report of the Committee on Nominations.

25. Each Main Committee shall, after consideration of the report of the Committee on Nominations, elect two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

26. Annex 2 to this report, prepared for the information of members of the Committee on Nominations, shows the distribution by country of office-bearers at earlier Health Assemblies.

27. The Director-General, in consultation with the Regional Director shall, if necessary, consider before the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly, delegates of Member States of the African Region who may serve effectively as:

- (a) Chairmen of the Main Committees A and B;
- (b) Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteurs of the Main Committees.

### **Informal meeting of the Regional Committee**

28. Before the opening of the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly, the Regional Director will convene an informal meeting of the Regional Committee on Monday, **16 May 2005, at 8.30 a.m.** at the *Palais des Nations*, Geneva. Information regarding the committee room where the meeting is to be held will be communicated in due course.

29. The informal meeting will confirm the decisions of the Regional Committee regarding Member States that will serve on the different committees of the World Health Assembly.

### **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

30. In accordance with Executive Board Resolution EB99.R28, the World Health Assembly, by its Resolution WHA50.18, operative paragraph 2(1) decided that the Executive Board, when preparing the provisional agenda of each World Health Assembly, shall normally include individual technical programme items in that agenda as separate items only

in the years when the World Health Assembly does not undertake a full review of the proposed biennial programme budget, thus allowing more time for discussing such technical items.

**ANNEX 1****PRESIDENTS OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

<b>Assembly</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>Country</b>
Thirtieth	1977	Dr S. TAPA	Tonga
Thirty-first	1978	M.K. MOHAMMED	Trinidad and Tobago
Thirty-second	1979	Professor P. TUCHINDA	Thailand
Thirty-third	1980	Dr A. R. AL-AWADI	Kuwait
Thirty-fourth	1981	Dr Néropi VIOLAKI-PARASKEVA	Greece
Thirty-fifth	1982	M.M. DIOP	Senegal
Thirty-sixth	1983	M. TANSRI CHONG HON NYAN	Malaysia
Thirty-seventh	1984	Dr G. Soberon ACEVEDO	Mexico
Thirty-eighth	1985	Dr S. SURJANINGRAT	Indonesia
Thirty-ninth	1986	Dr Z. HAMZEH	Jordan
Fortieth	1987	Dr J. VAN LONDEN	The Netherlands
Forty-first	1988	Dr NGANDU-KABEYA DIBANDALA	Democratic Republic of Congo
Forty-second	1989	Professor Minzhang CHEN	China
Forty-third	1990	Dr P. NARANJO	Ecuador
Forty-fourth	1991	Dr P.NYMADAWA	Mongolia
Forty-fifth	1992	M.A. AL-BADI	United Arab Emirates
Forty-sixth	1993	M.C. ORTENDAHL	Sweden
Forty-seventh	1994	M.B.K. TEMANE	Botswana
Forty-eighth	1995	Dato Dr HAJI JOHAR NOORDIN	Brunei Darussalaam
Forty-ninth	1996	Dr A.J. MAZZA	Argentina
Fiftieth	1997	M. Saleem I. SHERVANI	India
Fifty-first	1998	Dr F.R. Al-MOUSAWI	Bahrain
Fifty-second	1999	Maria de Belen ROSEIRA	Portugal
Fifty-third	2000	Dr. Libertina AMATHILA	Namibia
Fifty-fourth	2001	Dr Hong Sun HUOT	Cambodia
Fifty-fifth	2002	Dr J.F. López BELTRAN	El Salvador
Fifty-sixth	2003	Dr Kandaker Mosharrif HOSSAIN	Bangladesh
Fifty-seventh	2004	M. Mohammed Nasir KHAN	Pakistan

## ANNEX 2

**DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY OF FUNCTIONS DURING  
PRECEDING ASSEMBLIES**

**RÉPARTITION PAR PAYS DES FONCTIONS EXERCÉES  
AU COURS DES ASSEMBLÉES PRÉCÉDENTES**

The attached table provides information, by type of function, for each of the previous Assemblies.

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Le tableau ci-joint donne les informations par type de fonctions, pour chacune des Assemblées précédentes.

**TABLE/TABLEAU**

	WHA47 47ème Assemblée 1994	WHA48 48ème Assemblée 1995	WHA49 49ème Assemblée 1996	WHA50 50ème Assemblée 1997
Président President	Botswana	Brunéi Darussalam	Argentine	Inde
Vice-Présidents Vice-Presidents	Rep. démocratique populaire lao Égypte Thaïlande Slovénie Argentine	Burkina Faso Mexique Iran Biélarus Myanmar	Gabon Qatar Bulgarie Sri Lanka Fidji	Algérie Venezuela Libye Portugal Chine
Chairmen of Main Committees  Présidents des Commissions principales	Indonésie, Com. "A"  Arabie Saoudite, Com. "B"	Tanzanie, Com. "A"  Pologne, Com. "B"	Pays-Bas, Com. "A"  Afrique du Sud, Com. "B"	Belize, Com "A"  Kiribati, Com "B"
Other members of the General Committee  Autres membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée	Bahrain Burkina Faso Cap-Vert Chine Cuba France Gabon Guatemala Guinée Iran Israël Japon Nigéria Fédération de Russie Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Venezuela	Bolivie Botswana Chine Cuba France Indonésie Japon Kenya Malawi Maroc Mozambique Oman Panama Fédération de Russie Émirats Arabes Unis Royaume-Uni de grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique	Australie Canada Chine Croatie Cuba Équateur France Liban Mali Nigéria Oman Fédération de Russie Thaïlande Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Zaïre Zambie	Argentine Bulgarie Côte d'Ivoire Cuba Érythrée France Japon Maroc Mozambique Myanmar Fédération de Russie Seychelles Afrique du Sud Suède Émirats Arabes Unis Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique
Vice-Chairmen of Main Committees  Vice-Présidents des Commissions principales	Belgique, Singapour Com. "A"  Mexique, République centrafricaine Com."B"	Maroc, Iles Salomon, Com."A"  Inde, Honduras, Com. "B"	El Salvador, Philippines, Com. "A"  Bangladesh, Koweït, Com. "B"	Tunisie, Maurice, Com. "A"  Fédération de Russie, Nepal, Com. "B"
Rapporteurs of Main Committees  Rapporteurs des Commissions principales	Iraq, Com. "A"  Papouasie Nouvelle- Guinée, Com. "B"	Luxembourg, Com. "A"  Égypte, Com. "B"	Bhoutan, Com. "A"  Hongrie, Com. "B"	Suisse, Com. "A"  Liban, Com. "B"

	WHA51 51ème Assemblée 1998	WHA52 52ème Assemblée 1999	WHA53 53ème Assemblée 2000	WHA54 54ème Assemblée 2001
Président President	Bahrain	Portugal	Namibie	Cambodge
Vice-Présidents Vice-Presidents	Afrique du Sud République dominicaine Azerbaïdjan Bhoutan États fédérés de Micronésie	Bangladesh Jamaïque Jamahiriya arabe libyenne Samoa Zimbabwe	Australie Haïti Koweït Inde Ouzbékistan	Burkina Faso Nicaragua Pakistan Biélorus République pop. démocratique de Corée
Chairmen of Main Committees  Présidents des Commissions principales	Nouvelle Zélande, Com. "A"  Sri Lanka, Com. "B"	Oman, Com "A"  Mexique, Com "B"	Bangladesh, Com. "A"  Liban , Com. "B"	Kenya, Com. "A" Islande, Com. "B"
Other members of the General Committee  Autres membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée	Argentine Biélorus Burundi Chine Cuba Chypre France Guinée-Bissau Jamaïque Liban Niger Fédération de Russie Sierra Leone Espagne Ouganda Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique	Argentine Benin Burkina Faso Cape-Vert Chine Cuba France Israël Japon Kenya Liban Lituanie Fédération de Russie Sri Lanka Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Zambie	Bosnie-Herzégovine Burkina Faso Cap-Vert Canada Chine Cuba France Allemagne Ghana Lesotho Oman Palaos Fédération de Russie Afrique du Sud Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique Uruguay	Bahrain Bhoutan Bolivie Chine Cuba République démocratique du Congo Dominique France Guinée Bissau Iran (Rép. Islamique d') Japon Mali Niger Fédération de Russie Suède Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique
Vice-Chairmen of Main Committees  Vice-Présidents des Commissions principales	Danemark, Népal, Com. "A"  Guinée équatoriale Venezuela, Com. "B"	Ghana, Malaisie, Com. "A"  Bhoutan, Finlande, Com "B"	Nicaragua, Malte, Com. "A"  Algérie, Fidji , Com. "B"	Émirats Arabes Unis, Palaos, Com. "A"  Bahamas Swaziland, Com. "B"
Rapporteurs of Main Committees  Rapporteurs des Commissions principales	Pakistan, Com. "A"  Rép. tchèque Com. "B"	Kazakstan , Com. "A"  Tchad, Com. "B"	Madagascar, Com. "A"  Thaïlande, Com. "B"	Swaziland

	WHA55 55ème Assemblée 2002	WHA56 56ème Assemblée 2003	WHA57 57ème Assemblée 2004
Président President	El Salvador	Bangladesh	Pakistan
Vice-Présidents Vice-Presidents	Botswana Ukraine Népal Kiribati Oman	Cameroun Bolivie Jordanie Allemagne	Afrique du Sud Bulgarie Grenade Malaisie Timor-Leste
Chairmen of Main Committees  Présidents des Commissions principales	Ireland Senegal	Canada  Fidji	République démocratique Populaire du Laos, Com. "A" Bhoutan, Can "B"
Other members of the General Committee  Autres membres du Bureau de l'Assemblée	Barbades Chine Côte d'Ivoire Cuba République populaire et démocratique de Corée France Japon Mexique Maroc Fédération de Russie Rwanda Sao Tomé et Príncipe Sierra Leone Espagne Emirats Arabes Unis Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord États-Unis d'Amérique	Algérie Bahraïm Burundi Chine Cuba France Ghana Grèce Inde Iran (Islamic Republic) Jamaïque Lesotho Poland Russian Federation Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord Tanzanie États-Unis d'Amérique	Botswana Chili Chine (Rep. Popol.) Cuba Etats-Unis d'Amérique Fédération de Russie France Irlande Jamahiriya arabelyenne Kazakhstan Liberia Niger Nigeria Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord Tchad Trinité- et- Tabago Yemen
Vice-Chairmen of Main Committees  Vice-Présidents des Commissions principales	Brésil Inde  Tunisie Viet Nam	Benin  Maroc  Roumanie  République populaire et démocratique de Corée	Saint-Vincent-et-les-Grenadines, Pays-Bas, Com. "A"  République Centrafricaine, Jordanie, Can . "B"
Rapporteurs of Main Committees  Rapporteurs des Commissions principales	Comores Indonesie	Czech Republic  Venezuela	Bengladesh, Can "A" Hongrie, Can "B"

